

DOCUMENTS OF THE CEYLON NATIONAL CONGRESS AND NATIONALIST POLITICS IN CEYLON

1929-1950

Vol. II

EDITED BY

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THE DOCUMENTS: TABLE OF CONTENTS

DOCUMENTS OF THE CEYLON NATIONAL CONGRESS 1929–50

DOCUMENTS : TABLE OF CONTENTS IN DETAIL

Section IV

The Constitution of the National Congress and its Revisions, 1920–1944

Section V

Policies and Programmes, 1935–1948

Section VI

Annual Reports of the Ceylon National Congress, 1939–1945

Section VII

Constitutional Affairs, 1929–1945

Section VIII

Relations with other Political Groups in Ceylon, 1940–1946

Section IX

Indian Influences and Contacts, 1940–1947

Section X

Local Government Affairs, 1933–1943

A NOTE ON THE ARRANGEMENT OF THE DOCUMENTS

The Sources

If the documents printed in these volumes are likened to a tree, the trunk was derived from a body of manuscript material and pamphlets which were originally in the hands of Mr. J. R. Jayewardene and which were subsequently presented to the Department of National Archives— where they can be referred to under call number, Lot 60. Most of this material pertained to the period after 1929 though the Minute Book for the period 1919—1923 was also available[1] The branches of this tree have been derived from the following sources : the Gilbert Perera, MSS ;[2] the Sir Edwin Wijeyeratne MSS ,[3] the J R Jayawardene MSS ;[4] the E. J. Samarawickrame MSS;[5] one or two items supplied by Messrs J. A. I. Corray and H. A. Koattegoda;[6] newspapers; and photostats from the records of the Colonial Office during the 1930's, largely derived from a collection at the Archives and from another collection in the hands of Professor K. M. de Silva. In printing the documents, it was deemed advisable to avoid cluttering up the text with a reference to the source of each manuscript. Such references have been relegated to footnotes.

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1. The minutes have not been printed in S W.R.D. Bandaranaike's edition, *The Handbook of the Ceylon National Congress, 1919—1928*, (Colombo H. W. Cave & Co., 1928). A few extracts appear here and there, but extensive coverage is not given to this useful source. Accordingly, the opportunity has been utilised to reproduce whatever minutes are available for the period before 1929. Unfortunately, the minute book for the period April 1923-July 1928 has not yet been located.

2. Two ledger books and several pamphlets, manuscripts and cyclostyled documents were discovered by the editor in the possession of Mr. Gilbert Perera, an active member of the Ceylon National Congress in the 1940's. This material has been very generously donated to the Department of National Archives. The call number is lot 25.21.

3. [illegible] a call number.

4. Mr. J. R. Jayewardene has retained in his hands the correspondence with the Indian National Congress and other Indian nationalist leaders (which have been printed here within Section IX), his correspondence with Messrs. A. M. Brodie, P. Kandiah and the Ceylon Indian Congress, and other assorted documents. These will be referred to as the J. R. Jayewardene MSS. However, some of these documents have been subsequently donated to the Archives and can be found in lot 60.

5. [illegible]

Though the minutes of the Executive Committee of the Ceylon National Congress were, for the most part, excluded from Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike's edition of *The Handbook of the Ceylon National Congress 1919—1928*, it would appear that the entirety of the manuscript material available at that stage (the minutes excepted) was printed in indiscriminate fashion. No weeding appears to have been done. From the research students point of view, however, it is just as well that no deletions were made. Weeding and selection of historical documents (and extracts therefrom) on any subject demand a thorough knowledge of the subject by those who undertake the task. The Historiography on Sri Lanka, however, has not reached a stage in which it can be claimed that we have a definitive understanding of the *interplay of forces* and events in the period extending from the 1920's to the 1940's. Indeed, some of the documents which will help us to reach such an understanding have only been made available to the general public in recent years ; and other documents still remain under cover, so to speak.

Such conditions were held applicable to the contents of the present work as well. In the circumstances, the decision was taken to print virtually all the material *in the main body* of Ceylon National Congress documents (C.N.A., *Lot 60*). The weeding has been minimal. Indeed, the tendency has been expansive. Certain newspaper references pertaining to Congress activities or to constitutional affairs, and certain Colonial Office records on constitutional matters have also been included. These latter were *not specially selected* after a comprehensive survey of the newspapers and the records of the Colonial Office. The newspaper references are selections from chance findings and brief reconnaisances on the one hand, and from books of newspaper cuttings from the J. R. Jayewardene MSS and the Sir Edwin Wijeyeratne MSS on the other. The selections from the records of the Colonial Office are based purely on the limited body of materials photocopied by Professor K. M. de Silva and by the Director of the Department of National Archives. Time did not permit a more comprehensive survey prior to the selection of such supplementary documents. Indeed, such a survey could confidently be predicted to produce a body of material which would have extended the present work into several more volumes. In the circumstances, a question arose at an early stage in the preparation of these volumes as to whether this supplementary body of material—partial and hit-or-miss in origin—should be included at all. The *decision to include them* was taken *on three grounds* : firstly, they afford both the research student and the interested layman with a glimpse of the vast body of literature pertaining to the politics of early twentieth century Ceylon ; secondly, in the field of constitutional affairs they indicate that there were many other forces and interests (besides the Congress) which were at work in the period under review ; and thirdly, *they illustrate other contemporary* reactions to the activities of the Ceylon National Congress which serve as a corrective to the often partisan and rose-tinted views of the Congressmen. In short, this supplementary body of documents, however partial, provides one with a peek at a political world that was wider than the Ceylon National Congress and shows up the shortcomings of the Congress documents as a foundation for the history of the Ceylon National Congress itself.

The Arrangement

The documents have been arranged under eleven broad divisions or "Sections" These divisions were differentiated either with reference to their source, or to their content, or to a combination of the two. Sections II and III are solely based on the source of origin and relate respectively to the minutes of the Executive and Working Committees from 1919—1949 and the reports on the various sessions of the Ceylon National Congress in the period 1929—1950;[7] the subjects they pertain to are varied and they take up a considerable amount of the space in these volumes. Sections V (Policies and Programmes, 1935—1948) and VI (Annual Reports 1939—1945) are less extensive but share many of the characteristics of II and III; and each section stems (for the most part) from one type of document.

Section IV reproduces the constitutional structure of the Ceylon National Congress at various points of time. Like the other Sections described above, this Section originates from a particular procedural form adopted by the Congress, but unlike them pertains to one specific subject. Section I provides lists of office bearers, members of committees and members of the Congress; while arising from procedural techniques, like IV its content is subject-specific. To many laymen the inclusion o such a section might come as a surprise. My own research experience, however, revealed that the lists of delegates who attended certain sessions in the early 1920's, which have been included in the *Handbook of the Ceylon National Congress*, are of historical value and are among the most useful pages in that volume. It is anticipated that Section I will prove of like value to writers and historians in the future.

Section VII to X are derived from a variety of sources and are subject-specific. They are distinguished purely according to the content of the documents. VII deals with constitutional offairs, occupies considerable space and can be confidently held out as one of the sections that will attract the attention of readers. Section VIII pertains to the interaction between Congress and other political groups, including the Ceylon Indian Congress and the Ceylon Communist Party, during the 1940's and also contains some particularly interesting documents. Section IX also pertains to the 1940's and is largely the product of Mr. J. R. Jayewardene's pen; it is illustrative of the Indian influences and contacts which inspired Ceylonese nationalism and the Ceylonese nationalist movement from the early twentieth century. Section X is devoted to the role of the Congress in certain affairs of local government.

And finally there is a residuary Section XI with various miscellaneous items.

In listing items and numbering sub-sections no particular model has been followed. The scheme of itemisation has been hewn out by rough and ready experience. Each of the principal items within the eleven sections has been numbered in a continuous series. Thus, reference can be made to each such item without a reference to the major section. Each of these itemsis divided up and staked out as A B, C *et cetra*, and these divisions might contain further subdivisions staked out in turn as (1) (2) (3). Neither of these two levels of subdivision is listed in a continuous series. Thus to take random examples by way of illustration the identification code for the documents described below will be as indicted on the right.

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7. As most readers will be aware, the bulk of the *Handbook CNC* is taken up with reports on the two conferences of December 1917 and December 1918 and on the various sessions of the Ceylon National Congress in the 1920's.

Description	Reference in this book of Documents
*Enrolment of Branch Associations	10
*Minutes of Executive Committee Meeting of 26 October 1929	17 : B
*Draft Report on the Thirteenth Annual Sessions 18—19 December 1931	23 : B
*Letter to the Editor Ceylon Daily News from E.W. Perera, 20 December 1931	23 : C(1)
*H. R. Cowell's Memorandum on Another Interview with D. S. Senanayake, 26 June 1933	81 : B
*Minute by Sir Malcolm Macdonald, 14 July 1938 ..	102 : C(2)
*Letter from G. G. Ponnambalam to Malcolm Macdonald, 2 December 1938	114 : G(1)
*The Ceylon Communist Party's Resolutions and Memoranda, and the Ceylon National Congress, October-November 1944 ..	124 : B
*Letter from P. Kandiah to J. R. Jayewardene, 9 October 1942 ..	135 : A

In the instance of items 106, 141, 164, 167, 169, 175, 176, 178-182 and 188-190, however, the sub-sections are either so numerous or so brief and inconsequential that the normal alphabetical numbering has been dispensed with and numerals resorted to, thus :

*Letter to the Editor of the Times from Dr. Drummond Shiels, 17 August 1933	106 : 4
*The President, C.N.C. to Jawaharlal Nehru, 22 May 1946 ..	141 : 41

Under both schemes by which items have been distinguished and identified it would be possible to locate the items in these volumes without reference to the pagination. Page-references, of course, would be an additional aid and particularly valuable in the instance of lengthy items such as the minutes of the Executive Committee for a particular year, or the reports on certain Congress sessions.

A Note on Punctuation

Whether typed or handwritten many of the documents were marred by appalling standards of punctuation, Either being inundated with unnecessary punctuation marks or being devoid of any punctuation. Particularly in the former case, certain liberties have been indulged in : where it could readily be ascertained that no distortions of meaning would occur, unnecessary marks were deleted or a new mark judiciously included so as to bring out the meaning more lucidly. To make improvements in this fashion consistently, however, was a difficult task.

A Note on the Use of Capital Letters

According to the fashion of the times, the initial letter in many words was capitalised. To cite examples, such words and phrases as

Dominon Status	Island	General Elections
Press	Annual Sessions	Budget
Democracy	Income Tax	the Reform Memorandum
	the Party System,	

often began with capital letters. But there was little consistency in the manner in which this habit was indulged in. Even within the same manuscript, inconsistencies prevailed. There is a modicum of significance in the words chosen for such treatment, though regular adherence to the practice by all parties and the large number of words favoured in this manner perhaps reduce the significance which one might attach to this practice. In the case of certain words a decision

was made to simplify matters and not render the first letter in capitals ; for the most part, however, the capitals were allowed to stand. The following were among the terms most frequently altered in this way :

the parliamentary system	the annual sessions
the system of government	the special sessions
the present government	the state
the party system	the bar
the (Donoughmore) scheme	civil servants
the presidential address	public servants
the office (of the Congress)	the press
a sub-committee	the office bearers

However, this was a task in which it was very difficult to prevent oversights in typing. Again, since no consistency prevailed in the documents it is likely that some words which were not provided with a first letter in a particular document may have been inadvertently spelt with a capital letter because it was subject to such treatment on most occasions. In short, too great a reliance should not be paid to the accuracy of reproduction in this respect.

A Note on the Spelling of Proper Names.

[illegible] stage in the [illegible] as humanly [illegible] he guideline [illegible] ch name was drawn up on the foundation of any one of the following items of evidence, all of which in varying degrees may be presumed to have had the sanction of the individual concerned :

(1) the signatures used by the individual himself ;

(2) the manner in which pamphlets or articles under an individuals name were printed ;

(3) the manner in which their sons spell their names today—as indicated in the Telephone Directory ;

(4) Contemporary spellings adopted in Ferguson's *Ceylon Directory*.

In the case of lesser-known individuals the spelling of whose names could not be ascertained in this fashion, the guideline simply relied on the spelling denoted in the first instance on which the name appeared in the manuscripts.

[illegible] the names were altered [illegible] not be undertaken without errors creeping in.

III

SESSIONS OF THE CEYLON NATIONAL CONGRESS

19. LISTS OF ANNUAL AND SPECIAL SESSIONS[1]

19 : A. Lists of Annual Sessions

1st Sessions	1919	Colombo	11–13 December 1919
2nd Sessions	1920	Colombo	18 December 1920
3rd Sessions	1921	Colombo	22–23 December 1921
4th Sessions		Colombo	23 March and 20–21 April 1923 1923
5th Sessions	1923	Colombo	21–22 December 1923
6th Sessions	1924	Colombo	19–20 December 1924
7th Sessions	1925	Kandy	18–19 December 1925
8th Sessions	*1926*	*Galle*	*17–18 December 1926*
9th Sessions	1927	Colombo	16–17 December 1927
	1928		Postponed
11th Sessions	1929	Colombo	20–21 December 1929
12th Sessions	1930	Colombo	12–13 December 1930
13th Sessions	1931	Colombo	18–19 December 1931
14th Sessions	1932	Colombo	16–17 December 1932
15th Sessions	1933	Colombo	23 December 1933
16th Sessions	1934	Colombo	15 December 1934
17th Sessions	1935	Galle	21–22 December 1935
18th Sessions	1936	Colombo	19 December 1936
19th Sessions	1937	Colombo	18 December 1937
20th Sessions	1938	Panadura	17 December 1938
21st Sessions	1939	Kandy	27 December 1939
22nd Sessions	1940	Mirigama	20–22 December 1940
23rd Sessions	1941	Dummaladeniya	27–30 December 1941
24th Sessions	1942	Kelaniya	18–20 December 1942
25th Sessions	1943	Ambalangoda	17–19 December 1943
26th Sessions		Colombo	27–28 January 1945
27th Sessions		*Matara*	11–12 January 1946
28th Sessions		Colombo	18 January 1947
29th Sessions		Kandy	8 January 1950

See note on p. 902 re the numbering of the sessions.

1. Up to the year 1944 this list is largely based on a pamphlet compiled by Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, entitled "25 years—but yet." Reports on the sessions up to the year 1928 (inclusive) can be obtained from the *Handbook CNC* (1928).

19.B. LISTS OF SPECIAL SESSIONS[1]

	PURPOSE	PRESIDENT
16–18 October 1920	The Order-in-Council of 1920	James Peiris
27–28 October 1922	Abuse of Governor's powers and resignation of unofficials	H. J. C. Pereira
1 September 1928	Donoughmore Report	W. A. de Silva
17 August 1929	Governor's use of the power of certification	A. C. G. Wijeyekoon
14 May 1932	Constitutional reform	S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike
28 September 1935	Policy and programme	E.A.P. Wijeyeratne
4 March 1939	Governor's reform proposals	Sir. D. B. Jayatilaka
28 August 1943	Reforms Declaration of May 1943[2]	P. de S. Kularatne
2 September 1944	Boycott of Reforms Commission	P. de S. Kularatne (acting)
28 May 1949	Question of the dissolution of the Congress	George E. de Silva

A NOTE

The documents reveal a discrepancy in the numbering accorded to the annual sessions. Probably because the 10th annual sessions scheduled for 1928 were not held, the minutes refer to the annual sessions of 1929 as the "11th annual sessions." Accordingly, the annual sessions of 1937 are referred to as the "19th annual sessions." But the sessions held in 1938 were also given the same number (C.N.A., 60/98-99). In 1939 the sessions were once again referred to as the "21st annual sessions," but in 1940 the change made in 1938 was perpetuated when these sessions were also described as the "21st annual sessions." Since the practice commenced in 1940 of incorporating these numbers in all captions and in the title-faces of pamphlets, the discrepancy between the numbers on the documents (from 1938) and that which the editor has adopted on the basis of the practice begun in 1929 could be a source of confusion to readers and researchers.

1. All these sessions were held in Colombo.

2. This meeting turned out to be more like a discussion group. Its minutes are recorded *supra*, pp.789–91.

20. SPECIAL SESSIONS, 17 AUGUST 1929

20 : A MINUTES OF THE SESSIONS

A summary of the proceedings of the special sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held at the Ananda College Hall, Colombo on Saturday the 17th August 1929 at 10 a.m. to consider the situation created by the action of the Governor in imposing on the 5th July 1929 taxation by exercise of his powers of certification.

There were 105 delegates present.

The Hon. Mr. A. C. G. Wijeyekoon, President, delivered his presidential address.

The *first resolution* was:

> This Congress emphatically declares that the facts and circumstances relating to the proposal of Government to increase import duties afforded no justification for the exercise of the extraordinary powers reserved to the Governor by Clause 54 of the Ceylon Legislative Council Order-in-Council 1923 and its exercise in this instance by His Excellency, nullifying the unanimous vote of the Unofficial Members of the Legislative Council, is a misuse of the powers of certification.

Proposed by Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike. Seconded by Mr. E. M. Karunaratne. Supported by Messrs. O. B. de Silva, Piyadasa Sirisena, Abraham Silva and C. D. A. Gunawardene. The resolution was put to the house and carried *unanimously*.

1. From minute book containing Minutes of Executive Committee meetings. Unless otherwise specified this holds true for all the Minutes printed in Section III. Though the presentation of the Minutes entails repetition, in that the reports that follow contain neater accounts of the sessions, they have been included because they provide a quick view of the main business of the sessions.

The second resolution was:

> This Congress further expresses its strong condemnation of the precipitate and ill-advised action of the Governor which has undermined public confidence in the administration and appeals to the Secretary of State for the withdrawal of the taxation by certification of additional duties on imports including articles of food.

Proposed by Mr. G. K. W. Perera. Seconded by Mr. D. C. Senanayake. Supported by Messrs. R. E. W. Perera, J. Vincent Mendis, C. W. W. Kannangara and R. H. Sadris Silva. Opposed by Mr. D. H. S. Nanayakkara. The resolution was then put to the house and carried unanimously.

The third resolution was:

> That these resolutions be cabled to the Secretary of State and a copy of the proceedings forwarded to Government.

Proposed by Mr. S. Abeywickrema. Seconded by Mr. P. Givendrasinghe. Carried unanimously.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the chair.

20 : B. Draft Report on the Sessions[1]

A Warning to the Country

The special sessions of the Ceylon National Congress to utter a protest against the action of the Governor in resorting to his power of certification to increase the import duties, was held on Saturday in the Olcott Memorial Hall. The day was devoted to the discussion of three resolutions, the morning sessions beginning at 10.30 and the afternoon sessions at 2 with an interval at 12.30 for lunch.

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1. From C. N. A., 60/115. This report is in manuscript form as is the case with most of the reports that follow. These draft reports seem to have been prepared for the *Ceylon Daily News* (CDN) and even included the newspaper headlines and captions. On this occasion the draft has the following headlines:—

   Congress and the Crisis
   Vigorous Protest Against Certification
   Bankrupt Statesmanship
   Request to Secretary of State to Repeal Increased Taxation.

The report appeared in the *CDN*, 19 August 1929, with the same headlines.

Mr. A. C. G. Wijeyekoon, President of the Co[n]
the year, occupied the chair and there was a fa[ir]
number of delegates present. Among those acco[mmodated]
on the platform with the Executive Committ[ee of the]
Congress, were Lady Bandaranaike, Presiden[t of the]
Women's Franchise Union, Mrs Wijeyekoon and
S. Gunewardene.[1]

A special sessions of Congress was held on Sat[urday]
17th August 1929 at the Olcott Memorial Hall
College, to protest against the Governor, Si[r]
Stanley's, use of the power of certification, to ap[peal to the]
Secretary of State to remove the increase put on
duties, and to demand a definition of what is
paramount importance.

Mr. A. C. G. Wijeyekoon, President of the Co[ngress for]
the year, who presided, condemned the actio[n of the]
Governor in no uncertain terms, and Mr. G. K.
urged that if the Secretary of State upheld the c[ertification]
and the Government rejected unofficial proposals
the estimates of expenditure, the unofficials sho[uld throw]
out the budget and resign.

Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike criticised S[ir]
Fernando in vigorous fashion for his conduct in
a newspaper to heap abuse on the Councill[ors]
protest was endorsed by the whole country.

At the close of the sessions the unofficial's
protest in walking out of the Council wa[s]
applauded.

A. C. G. Wijeyekoon's Presidential Address

The President, in opening the proceedin[gs said:]
"Brother delegates and sister delegates, let me
opportunity, the first I have had of addressing
from the chair, to thank you most cordially for t[he]

1. The two paragraphs and the sub-heading presented abo[ve were]
crossed out in the draft. But they have been inserted in the CD[...]
point just before the resume of the presidential address.

you have done me by electing me your President for this year. I appreciate the honour all the more as the period is one of transcending importance on account of the pending reform of our constitution. Ordinarily the interval between the election of the President and the General Sessions of the Congress is very short. But, you will remember that this year, the Executive Committee of Congress decided that the General Sessions should follow the Secretary of State's Despatch on the Donoughmore Report. That despatch which the country has anxiously awaited is long in coming. I am afraid that it will not be here till the end of the year. I think, however, that the delay is a good sign. It is an indication that the proposals are receiving the critical examination that their importance demands. We have to possess our souls in patience till the result of that examination is revealed. As you know the report was fully discussed by us and resolutions passed at a special sessions of the Congress held on September 10, 1928. Those resolutions are now before the Secretary of State.

A Grave Situation

Therefore I do not propose to make any further reference to the report itself. Moreover, it would be foreign to the purpose of this—a special session of Congress—for us to deal with that subject. This special session of Congress has been summoned for the consideration of a matter of the greatest importance to the country. We have met here under grave circumstances. Therefore, I would ask you to approach the subject under discussion with a due sense of responsibility. But you will permit me to remark, that it is notable that on the eve of the introduction of that subject that the old constitution should have received a shock which affects that very part of its foundation which is to be strengthened and fitted into the new.

Never Before

The President next referred to the course of events that led to the increase of taxes on import duties, by the powers of certification vested in the Governor against the unanimous opposition of the unofficial members in Council

and said: "The power of certification has been held by Governors of this Island for the last ten years, but this is the first time it has been used. With due respect for the convictions of His Excellency, I would submit that at this juncture it was an error to resort to certification and to exercise that special power thereby causing great uneasiness in the country.

People are now more than convinced that the present Reforms have given us no more political rights than we had before and that the representatives of the people are powerless and cannot be of service to the country."

What Sir William Manning Said

In this connection it would be interesting to refer to a statement made by our late Governor, Sir William Manning in the debate on the reconstitution of the Legislative Council in 1920:

> In regard to the question of paramount importance I do not mean to say much about that, as the Attorney-General in his remarks has made it very clear what the intentions of the Order-in-Council are and what the views of the government in that connection are. But I may tell you that a similar clause existed in the constitution of Jamaica. That constitution was framed in 1884 and up to the time of my departure from Jamaica in 1918—a period of 34 years—that power has been used but once; and I believe that it it very unlikely that power will likewise be used in this council for a similar period.
>
> In India these powers have been resorted to on three occasions, but on every occasion the Governor-General has had the opposition of the elected members and has taken time to consider whether such an extreme measure was really necessary.

It is this question of taxation by certification that we have met here to consider. It is of the utmost importance, for it relates to the exercise of a power which is to be perpetuated in the new Constitution, and I trust that we shall be able

to prevent a cloud gathering round the issue by finely limiting the time and attention which we shall give to the side issues that cluster round it.

The Council's Functions

To impose the taxes or not is ordinarily the function of the Legislative Council. It is a right which the representatives of the people all over the world guard most jealously. The letter of Clause 54 of the Ceylon Legislative Order-in-Council, 1923, would no doubt render legal the adoption of the pettiest proposal that has been declared one of paramount importance. It would render the establishment of an aquarium as effectually legal as the restoration of a budget completely rejected by a Legislative Council. That is the letter of the law. But the spirit of it is very different. Its exercise is controlled by what are known as the conventions of the constitution. The two together constitute what is known as Constitutional Law.

Violation of The Rights of The People

Mr. Wijeyekoon here quoted from Dicey's Law of the Constitution and continuing said: "We are here to assert that the certification of the additional custom duties is a violation of the principles and an invasion of the rights of the people, that their representatives should decide what taxation should be imposed unless and until an unqualified refusal by them to provide funds brings the administration to a standstill or prevents it from taking some measure essential for the carrying on of the administration.

My contention is that the exercise of the powers of certification is governed by the words "paramount importance." Is the present financial situation one that needed the exercise of those special emergency powers? The term "paramount importance" needs a clear definition. Clause 54 of the Order-in-Council was never intended to be used in the manner in which it had been used, and the grounds on which it had been used are, in my opinion, not strong.

Then naturally the fear arises, where is the guarantee that this sort of certification may not be repeated. This is a question of paramount importance to us and to the whole country. If the resolutions and decisions of the Legislative Council are not given full appreciation, then it amounts to this: that those resolutions and decisions will remain on paper alone and we shall not in effect be able to do any good to the country." (applause)

Misuse of The Governor's Powers

Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike then proposed:

> That this Congress emphatically declares that the facts and circumstances relating to the proposal of Government to increase import duties afforded no justification for the exercise of the extraordinary powers reserved to the Governor by Clause 54 of the Ceylon Legislative Council Order-in-Council, 1923 and its exercise in this instance by His Excellency, nullifying the unanimous vote of the Unofficial Members of the Legislative Council, is a misuse of the powers of certification.

Mr. Bandaranaike said that he had been requested to propose that resolution in place of Mr. M. H. Jayatilleke who had been unfortunately prevented from being present. The resolution was divided into two parts, the first part dealing to some extent with the legal aspect. There were generally speaking two types of constitutions, the flexible type like that of England, depending chiefly on the conventions of the constitution, and the rigid type like that of the United States of America which depended on a written legal enormous scope for turning and twisting, whereas in the case of a constitution like that of England, there was enormous scope for turning and twisting, whereas in the case of a written constitution great difficulties arose when they had to make the terms of the constitution fit the changing circumstances which the framers of the constitution could not have foreseen. The United States, however, met the difficulty by reference to the Supreme Court of America. The type of constitution in Ceylon was a rigid one

based upon the Order-in-Council of 1923. Section 54 of that Order-in-Council gave the power to the Governor to declare a matter of paramount importance in the public interest. It gave the Governor the power to exercise an overriding right of introducing legislation of whatever sort he wished. "Paramount importance" was defined in the ordinance in a most monstrous fashion against all elementary principles of democratic government. It was simply the opinion of the Governor on any subject. Whether that was a reasonable definition or not was a different question. According to the mere letter of the law the Governor was perfectly within his rights in using the powers that he had. They give a man power to call a donkey or a goat a race-horse or, if he wished, a Jaw an Englishman, but whether that was correct or not was a different matter.

The Interest of The Public

What was the necessity of adding to the section "a matter of paramount importance in the public interest" if the public were not going to be consulted. When the public were unanimously against that decision the question arose whether the Governor was right in deciding in that way. Lord Milner in reference to that particular order stated that that was not a power which was to be used except rarely. It was stated that the power was not to be used unless and until the essential functioning of Government was brought to a standstill by some apparently perverted attitude of the people. In fairness it should be stated, as Mr. Tyrrel had said in his budget speech, that the Government considered that retrenchment was impossible and that in its view the administration could not be carried on without the use of those powers vested in the Governor in putting through taxation. Their representatives in Council had not opposed that extraordinary section because they felt that in the spirit of Lord Milner's despatch it was a power that would never have been exercised except in those special circumstances. It was the exhibition of good faith and generosity on the part of the people's representatives that made them accept that. In the United States of America such a difficulty was referred to the Supreme Court but in

Ceylon there is no provision for an appeal. This incident was a very good eye-opener and, in fact, a god-send in the face of the special powers proposed to be given to the Governor by the Donoughmore Commission. It was possible for them to appeal to the Secretary of State but he was not an impartial arbitrator like the Supreme Court of America. The Secretary of State was the direct head of the Governor, and a former Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies had stated that unless something very important happened the decision of the man on the spot would be upheld. Who then was the arbitrator to whom they could refer in a matter arising out of the Constitution like that? That was the anomalous position created by that section.

Continuing, Mr. Bandaranaike said that although the increase in taxation was very slight the increase in dealers' prices was out of all proportion to that increase.

A Newspaper Presumably Respectable

"It seems very strange to me" said Mr. Bandaranaike, "that a newspaper presumably respectable, run by a great authority on taxation, Sir Marcus Fernando, should day after day resort to every kind of device discrediting the action of our Councillors—(cries of "Shame!")—urging the Governor to stand by his decision like Horatius holding the the bridge (laughter and cries of "Shame!"). Anybody like Sir Marcus Fernando, who pretends to be a great expert on taxation—I do not pretend to be one—would realise the unfairness of the present taxes and also realise that this principle of taxation is against all normal principles of taxation where there is a feasible and normal alternative. I have often wondered whether in view of the extension of the franchise we are fit to exercise that franchise but when I consider that so long ago by such a vast majority Sir Marcus Fernando was kept out of that very Council, I am convinced that our people are entirely fit to exercise the franchise. (applause). One of the few things that have been exercised by our people with good sound

Commonsense is the correctness of the view exercised in keeping out of the Council one whom I have not the slightest hesitation in describing as an unscrupulous—! (cries of " Deport him ! "). That is my honest opinion on the facts before us. What can the people think of a man, who presumably for reasons not entirely dishonest, runs down the action of your Councillors in this matter of certification which is completely condemned by all the people of this country? What other epithet can you apply to such a man than this ? I do not think that that paper represents the public opinion of Ceylon nor do I believe that the public will not remember that action if and when the occasion arises for them to remember." (applause).

Continuing, Mr. Bandaranaike said that although there was the precedent set by Sir William Manning in 1921 when a similar situation arose and the representatives of the people were consulted, Sir Herbert Stanley had not followed that procedure. He would generously describe the present action of the Governor as an act of mental abberration. (laughter). A suggestion had been made that they should ask for the recall of the Governor but he would be more generous than that and hope that the proverbial pinch of " Kruschen " salts would have the desired effect on him.

In conclusion the speaker said that if that reserved power was continued in the Reformed Constitution, it would act still more hardly. In the present Order-in-Council some discussion was possible, but according to the Donoughmore Commission proposals they were going to be deprived of that also. That report was nothing more than a cruel joke. Ministers were going to be appointed with salaries of Rs. 27,000, but with no power, and the Governor was to be given the added powers of certifying Bills and enacting legislation without even consulting the representatives of the people.

Confidence in Councillors

Mr. E. M. Karunaratne, in seconding the resolution, endorsed the remarks made by the mover on the subject. The action of the Governor in certifying the taxes had become so notorious that the recapitulation of the circumstances which led to it was superfluous. The first blunder which was committed by the Government was the introduction of measures to enhance the burden of taxation without having previously discussed the proposals with the peoples' representatives in Council. Having done that the Government flouted the unanimous opinion of all unofficial members and used its extraordinary powers to force it on the country.

Far from the Councillors having been negligent of their duties, they had done all they possibly could to advance the interests of the people and had obtained for them what had been in their power to secure.

"The conduct of the unofficial members in this particular instance was endorsed by the whole country," said the speaker, "and attempts made by designing persons to misrepresent public opinion and attack the unofficials were an infamy."

The speaker thought that they owed to their representatives in Council to assure them of the Country's appreciation of services rendered by the unofficial members in Council during thtir term of office and the speaker hoped that at that sessions a resolution would be moved, with the unanimous support of all present, expressing the confidence the people had in their accredited representatives in Council (hear, hear).

Implications of Loan

Mr. O. B. de Silva, in supporting the resolution, denounced the methods of government as being calculated to further the ends of Imperial policy at the expense of the people of this Island. The insistence of Ceylon taking a loan from Great Britain found its source of inspiration in the ambition

to prosecute that policy, for, the speaker contended, obviously a loan from Great Britain to Ceylon meant that we would be held in economic bondage to Great Britain for years to come. It would mean that [the] Ceylon government would be compelled to buy British manufactured commodities increasingly to the exclusion of economic considerations. It would no doubt increase the prosperity of British Commerce and reduce appreciably the number of Britain's unemployed. That was the ultimate aim of Ceylon been [*sic*] made to raise a loan in Great Britain. To urge that a loan in Great Britain is inevitable in order to carry on work which has already been undertaken was all cant and humbug.

It was another way of trying to force on Ceylonese statesmen and politicians the idea that the dictum of the Whitehall expert should be accepted as the final solution to their financial problems, under cover of the pretence that it was done in the best interests of the Colony. The present was the most important crisis that had ever risen in the fortunes of this country.

Well-founded Fear

One of their worst fears had centred on the manner in which the Governor would use his powers of certification, and the present instance proved that the fear was fully justified.

The correct significance of a loan on the lines of [*sic*] Government was the operation of Imperial policy, emphasized the speaker. In the past they had been too ready to accept the wisdom that came from Whitehall. He did not see why loan works should not be financed from funds utilised on loan account—from general revenue. But the master-strategist at Whitehall had been too wily for them and had enough chicanery to outwit the ablest Ceylonese legislator. The result was the fattening of the dividends of the Crown Agents.

Like The Scorpion

Mr. Piyadasa Sirisena also supported the resolution. He compared the Governor, with the reserve powers vested in him, to a scorpion with its fangs ever ready, to inflict the fatal sting in the object within its deadly hold. Therefore they would see how dangerous it was to allow any one to possess powers in the use of which there was no discrimination or distinction. He disabused the minds of the British statesmen of the misapprehension that Ceylonese were foreign to all ethics of administrative government Ancient Sinhalese constitutional authorities had made elaborate expositions of constitutional government far more effectively than any British Statesman. If they were to be given any reform at all let it be an appreciable amount of real responsible government without mere pretensions to responsibility, whereas in reality the representatives of the people had no power at all in shaping the administrative policy of the Island or in the control of its finances. In regard to the taxation by certification it was unlikely that the government would withdraw certification, and in that case he thought the unofficial members of Council would leave the government alone to carry on and resign.

Mr. Abraham Silva next spoke in support of the motion, and was followed by Mr. C. D. A. Gunawardene.

The resolution was then put to the house and carried unanimously.

Governor's Action Condemned

Mr. G. K. W. Perera next proposed the following resolution:

> That this Congress further expresses its strong condemnation of the precipitate and ill-advised action of the Governor which has undermined public confidence in the administration and appeals to the Secretary of State for the withdrawal of the taxation by certification of additional duties on imports incl
> articles of food.

Mr. Perera began by making a few remarks on the budget and the circumstances that had brought them there to express indignation at the attitude of the government. It took a certain amount of financial ability to prepare the Budget, said the speaker, and as to who the particular author of it was they had no evidence although the responsibility for its preparation rested with the Governor.

They had no evidence of the Governor's knowledge of finance except on the Racecourse and as Patron of the Club. They all know his ability to make beautiful speeches at social and other gatherings, but there was no evidence that the Governor knew aught of Finance. So that they were reduced to the position of guessing who framed the budget and naturally turned to those great men—the Treasurer and the Colonial Secretary whom the Governor looked to for financial advice and took the responsibility for whatever indiscretions those officials might commit.

Continuing, Mr. Perera said the matter of certification had two different aspects. The certification was said to be wrong because the increased duty which it enforced would be felt by the poor people. He did not, however, attach too much importance to that, because the real question they were faced with was of much importance. He might say that after all the poor were made to suffer and the poor had suffered in all countries. So there was no reason why they should not suffer for being poor. He attached importance to the question of certification on a much stronger ground—one which was more vital a point than being out of pocket by a few rupees. For the sake of good government under certain circumstances the Governor had been allowed to use powers of certification, such as in the case of a national crisis or a matter of imperial concern.

A Sound Lesson

In regard to the use of the powers of certification in the present instance, they were not connected with any matters of imperial policy. They were concerned only with a

domestic matter and they knew that neither the power of veto nor that of certification would be exercised in any constitutional country except in a very serious case, such as in the event of the Legislature refusing to pass the budget and the government, in consequence, was [*sic*] prevented from voting funds for the maintenance of the judiciary of the land or its essential services. In such a case the Governor would certify certain portions of expenditure, which were considered absolutely essential, but even then the Governor would not be justified in certifying the whole budget. In the present instance no such crisis had arisen.

A Practical Example

Mr. Perera contended that it was now within the power of the peoples' representatives to give a practical illustration to what really a "matter of paramount importance" could be. A practical example should be given to the Governor for his edification in this respect if the Secretary of State and the Governor were not willing to withdraw the certified taxes or in the alternative, if the government was not going to accept, and turned down, the proposals to reduce the expenditure which the unofficials were putting forward. They should then refuse to pass the budget (applause). That would be a real crisis and it would be a real opportunity for the Governor to use his powers of certification. The Governor would then have had his lesson and know the difference between the two situations.

A Grave Warning

The powers of certification had been reserved in the proposed new constitution and for that reason it was necessary to take critical note of it. In that connection he warned them that it was possible that the history of this country in the change of its constitution might be but the history of another country (Philippines). Mr. Perera recalled how a commission was delegated with the task of reporting on the Philipine [*sic*] constitution and the latter had been recommended full independence, in spite of which the opinion of a subsequent Governor (General Wood) super-

seded the commissioner's most liberal recommendations, and the U. S. A. Government went back on its promises to grant the Phill.pines [*sic*] independence. Let them see that there is no repetition of the Philipine [*sic*] history here. (applause). "We have got a Governor who started in a social way to get himself liked, but this Governor has arrogated to himself the same powers that Governor Wood arrogated to h.mself in the Philippines [*sic*]. He simply ignores the Executive Council except in such unimportant matters as concern village committees. When it comes to matters of State he has nothing to do with the Executive Council, but resorts to his secret cabinet——himself, the Colonial Secretary and the Treasurer. And if we do not take firm action I warn you that you will share the fate of the Philipine [*sic*] Islands."

Non-Co-operation

If Ceylon's experience of British Government was going to be continued, concluded Mr. Perera, on the lines laid down by the present Governor of certifying on trifling matters and nullifying the unanimous vote of the unofficial members of the Council, at least so far as he was concerned he would say, with Mahatma Gandhi: "The British Government is evil and I shall not co-operate with evil." It had been his intention, said the speaker, to add a rider to the resolution to the effect that "the Congress pledges itself to support non-co-operation with the government unless the cuts and other proposals of the unofficials are not respected by the government." He wished he had the power to move that, but whether it was formally moved or not he was sure that they all were unanimous that unless the Government respected the wishes of the unofficial members they should turn the whole budget down (applause).

A Civilised People

Mr. D. C. Senanayake, in seconding the resolution, said it was essential for them to find out whether the government considered the people of the country civilised or uncivilised. Were they to be required only for the purpose of garlanding officers or for tea parties ? It was also worthwhile for them

to consider whether the pill in the Donoughmore Commission with regard to the Committee system and the extraordinary powers vested in the Governor were to be swallowed by the people of this country. He thought that owing to the shameful way in which the people had been treated and their rights spurned they should rise and defend those rights.

The Mailed Fist

Mr. R. E. W. Perera said that when the Governor overrode the decisions of the Legislative Council with regard to the Kurunegala Kraal and the Katukurunda railway collision he showed the mailed fist. Their Councillors should have on those occasions retaliated.

Mr. E. W. Perera: "What was there to be done!"

Mr. R. E. W. Perera: "You should have walked out!" (Laughter and applause).

Continuing, Mr. R. E. W. Perera said that taking courage from the success of those arbitrary acts the Governor had now gone further and certified the new taxes, without consulting the peoples' representatives. He (Mr. Perera) thought that their Councillors should not co-operate with the [sic] government that persisted in overriding the wishes of the people in such arbitrary fashion. Even after the Governor had certified those taxes, he had been received with pandals and garlands in Jaffna. It was no wonder that the government thought that the rights of the people could be more and more trampled upon.

Mr. J. Vincent Mendis said that on the last occasion when the representatives of the people non-co-operated with the government with regard to the question of the reform of the Constitution, government soon saw wisdom. On the present occasion so far as he understood it was on a telephone message that the Governor has certified taxation. That took them back to the days of the despots. The creation of such a situation was worse for British administration than for them because of the reputation for British Justice. Sir Hugh Clifford used to go about the country saying that he had

no power and informing the people to ask everything from the unofficial members of Council but what had Sir Herbert Stanley done? While they were proud of the fact that their Councillors had walked out of the Council and thus showed their disapproval of the action of the Governor they wished them to be present at the Select Committee meetings. They had been told by newspapers that the Governor had not even consulted the Executive Council in that matter and he wondered whether the Executive Councillors were contemplating a walk-out. It was stated that the Labour government was democratic and they hoped that it would not support the men on the spot without hearing the other side.

Further Taxes From October

Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara said that whatever happened in this country it was the unofficials who were blamed. They were blamed for not walking out of the Council after the Katukurunda Railway disaster and the Kurunegala Kraal debates but they should remember that there was no unanimity in those matters. And the one occasion they needed to act together they had done so as the people had desired (applause).

With regard to the increased taxes he wished to mention that from October 1 there would be additional taxes. Postage stamps would be increased to six cents each and postcards to three cents. The rights of the people were being trampled down. If a Governor were allowed to carry on the Government by ignoring the wishes of the people the only thing left for the people of this country to do was to sink all their differences and prejudices and unite to fight for their rights.

The Absentees

Mr. A. W. H. Abeyesundere asked Mr. Kannangara whether he could inform them why so many unofficial Members absented themselves from the Select Committee's meeting on the budget (applause).

The President : " I am afraid Mr. Kannangara will not be able to answer that question. "

Mr. Kannangara :" I can tell you one thing. I have never been absent (applause). As to why some have absented themselves I do not know. It should be asked of them."

Boycott of the Council

Mr. W. Karunaratne said he was glad of the explanation given by Mr. Kannangara. They had to ask their representatives what they did in the Council. He did not mean to blame those Councillors who were there only but those who did not do their duty, such as those who absented themselves from the Select Committee meetings. He also wished to add, and if he was allowed he would move as an amendment, that if their demands were not granted their representatives should boycott the Council.

The President said that 24 hours' notice should be given of any amendment.

Mr. Karunaratne replied that when they had to be trampled down it was declared a matter of paramount importance and no notice was required, but he would submit to their constitution. It had, however, to be stated that it was owing to their not taking such firm action that the government did not pay any heed to them.

Mr. R. H. Sadris Silva next spoke in support.

Mr. D. H. S. Nanayakkara, in opposing the resolution, said that the only solution to the present crisis was to ask for the recall of the present Governor because it was possible for the friends of the Governor to advise him ill again and do greater harm to the country. The cable they proposed to send to the Secretary of State, he had no doubt, would be thrown into the wastepaper basket and their pious resolutions would thus be useless.

The resolution was then put to the house and adopted.

Cable to Secretary of State

Mr. S. Abeywickrema then proposed the third and last resolution; viz.

> That these resolutions be cabled to the Secretary of State and a copy of the proceedings forwarded to the Government.

In commending the resolution to the house, the Speaker invited the audience to carry in acclamation a vote of thanks to the unofficial Members of Council for their services to the country.

Mr. G. O. C. Cooray: "I rise to a point of order."

Mr. A. W. H. Abeyesundere: "Are you expressing your individual opinion or that of the country?"

Mr. Abeywickrema: "My individual opinion."

The matter was dropped and the speaker moved the resolution.

Mr. P. Givendrasinghe, in seconding, said he hoped that if the request embodied in the resolution was not complied with, the unofficial Members would resign their seats in the Council and that the people would insist on the recall of the Governor.

The resolution was then put to the house and carried unanimously.

The meeting ended with a vote of thanks to the chair and with three cheers for the unofficial Members for their services to the country.

21. ELEVENTH ANNUAL SESSIONS, 20-21 DECEMBE 1929

21: A. Minutes of the Sessions

Summary of the proceedings of the eleventh annu sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held at the Tow Hall, Colombo on the 20th and 21st December, 1929.

Proceedings began with the address of the Chairman the Reception Committee, Col. T. G. Jayewarden Mr. George E. de Silva, the President, then occupied tl chair and delivered his presidential address.

Telegrams wishing the deliberations all success fro Messrs. N. J. Martin and C. S. Rajaratnam were read. M G. K. W. Perera then asked a question. He desired to kno the names of the members of the Executive Committ referred to by the Presidents as having resigned from tl Committee and why they had so resigned. The Preside replied that, as no notice of the question had been give he would ask the Hony. Secretaries to answer the questic the next day at the business meeting.

Mr. G. C. S. Corea then moved the first resolution on tl agenda:

> In as much as the continuance of the present Constit tion is detrimental to the best interests of the countr the Ceylon National Congress strongly recommen the acceptance of the proposed Scheme of Constitution Reforms as modified by the Secretary of State for tl Colonies.

Mr. D. W. Subasinghe seconded the resolution.

The President announced that there was an amendme to be moved next day by Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara. At 4.3 p.m. the sessions were declared adjourned for 9.30 a.n next day. Thereafter, the Chairman of the Receptio Committee was "At Home" to the delegates at Turr House.

Proceedings began on Saturday, the 21st December a 9.30 a m. with the President in the chair.

Before the business of the day began, the President announced that Mr. D. B. Jayatilaka was unable to be present at the deliberations owing to the illness of Mrs. Jayatilaka and the President requested all present to pray for her speedy recovery.

Mr. R. S. S. Gunewardene, Jt. Hony. Secretary, supplied the reply to Mr. Perera's question of the previous day. Letters addressed to the Congress by Mr. E. W. Perera and four other members and Mr. C. E. Corea were read.

Mr. G. K. W. Perera asked the permission of the house to submit the following resolution in connection with the resignations of the members :

> With reference to the resignation from this Congress tendered by six of its members, the said members be informed that improper conduct on the part of any of its members has to be corrected by the censure of the Congress ; and that resignation on account of misconduct on the part of others is selfish and not conducive to the public welfare ; and that the said members be requested, as the Congress value their co-operation, to reconsider their withdrawal, and if they desire to represent to the Executive Committee the grievances they allege, that they may be dealt with at a special session of the Congress.

Mr. F. A. Obeyesekere rose to a point of order and the President ruled that according to the constitution no resolution could be introduced unless it had been submitted beforehand to the Executive Committee. The President also stated that he would place the matter before the Committee during the interval.

Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara then moved the following amendment to the first resolution :

> This Congress reaffirms its demand for Full Responsible Government at the next revision of the Constitution but pending such revision recommends the acceptance

for a short period of the proposed Donoughmore Scheme on Constitutional Reforms as modified by the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Mr. V. S. de S. Wikramanayake seconded the amendment.

Messrs. F. A. Obeyesekere, G. K. W. Perera, J. N. Jinendradasa and S. Abeywickrema supported the original motion, while the amendment was supported by Messrs. W Sathasivam, P. Givendrasinghe and D. S. Senanayake Mr Sadris Silva opposed both the resolution and the amendment. Mr. A. A. de Silva wished to know what the limit of a short period was, a month, a year, or more. Mr. Kannangara replied that he left the measure of time to the Congress to decide. Mr. G. C. S. Corea, the mover of the resolution, replied and the amendment was put to the vote. Only one voted against it and the amendment was carried The meeting then adjourned for lunch.

On resumption after lunch at 2 p.m. the President announced that the Executive Committee had decided to disallow Mr. G. K. W. Perera's resolution with regard to the resignation of the six members.

Mr. W. Sathasivam then moved the following resolution:

The Ceylon National Congress urges the Government to give effect without further delay to the final recommendations of the Land Commission.

Mr. A. W. H. Abeyesundere seconded the resolution.

Mr. G. K. W. Perera moved the following amendment:

That Government be requested to defer giving effect to the recommendations of the Land Commission until the new Constitution comes in to operation.

O. B. de Silva seconded the amendment.

W. Sathasivam accepted the amendment, which, put to the house, was carried unanimously.

Mr. Amarasuriya next proposed that:

> The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that steps should be taken to organise evening or night classes throughout the country with a view to ensuring that all adults, both male and female, should achieve literacy as early as possible.

Mr. O. B. de Silva seconded the resolution and Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa supported it. The motion was unanimously carried.

The last resolution on the agenda,

> That the Scheme of Reform of the Congress Constitution, as approved at the meeting of the Executive Committee held on the 29th June, 1929, be adopted,

was moved by Mr. M. H. Jayatilleke and seconded by Mr. R. S. S. Gunewardene. Carried.

R. S. S. Gunewardene
Jt. Hony. Secretary.

21 : B. Draft Report on the Sessions[1]

The eleventh annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress was held in the Tower Hall on the 21st of December, 1929 with Mr. Geo. E. de Silva, the President, in the chair. The gathering of delegates and visitors was smaller than on previous occasions, only about half the body of the

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1. This is based on a handwritten draft and a newspaper cutting from *The Times of Ceylon*, dated 21 December 1929, which is attached (C.N.A., C0/83). The draft contains several amendments and deletions, while the cutting is limited largely to a full text of Col. T. G. Jayewardene's welcoming speech. Both have been amalgamated so as to present a report which is coherent and sequential. Attention has been paid to providing as full information as possible and even deleted portions have been included. The draft report on the presidential address is in a different hand to that of the earlier part of the draft. The sessions were reported in the *CDN* of the 21st December, 1929, under the captions provided in the draft:

   Congress in Session
   Amendment to Resolution
   Reforms Trial
   Resignations from Executive.

hall being occupied, a large number of associations having decided not to send delegates.[1] On the platform were accommodated a large number of members of the Executive Committee and a few ladies: the President, Messrs. F. A. Obeyesekere, D. B. Jayatilaka, D. S. Senanayake, D. C. Senanayake, C. W. W. Kannangara, V. S. de S. Wikramanayake, Col. T. G. Jayewardene, Messrs. A. C. G. Wijeyekoon, G. K. W. Perera, G. C. S. Corea, D. W. Subasinghe, W. A. de Silva, [S.] Abeywickrema, E. Y. D. Abeygunawardena, G. Robert de Zoysa, P. de S. Kularatne, P. Givendrasinghe, C. E. C. Bulathsinhala, N. J. V. Cooray, W. E. Bastian, O. B. de Silva and S. W. R. Dias Bandaranaike and R. S. S. Gunewardene; and Mrs. W. A. de Silva, Mrs. Geo. E. de Silva, Mrs. R. S. S. Gunewardene, Mrs. D. M. Gunasekera, Mrs. O. E. Felsinger, Miss Perumal, Miss Leslie Rodrigo and Mrs. D. Amerasinghe.

Although the sessions was timed to start at 2 o'clock, it was quite twenty-five minutes later that the deliberations began after[2] a group photograph of the President, the committee and the ladies was taken.

Col. T. G. Jayewardene, Chairman of the Reception Committee, who was garlanded by Mr. C. E. C. Bulathsinhala, first occupied the chair and welcoming the delegates said:[3]

"Sister and brother delegates and gentlemen, on behalf of my committee I have great pleasure in offering you a cordial welcome here today. To those of you who come from distant parts our thanks are especially due for the trouble and inconvenience you have put yourselves to in attending session in this city.

. This sentence has been deleted in the draft, but appears in the same form he *CDN*. *The Times of Ceylon* report stated that there "was a considerable ering."

The section of the sentence ending at "after" has been crossed out. Here he *CDN* version contained the deleted portion.

s in *The Times of Ceylon*, 21 December, 1929 which presented a report the captions: "National Congress Demand;" "No Intention To Accept ng Less;" "Acceptance Motion under Discussion". The newspaper's es have been omitted. The *CDN* reported the Colonel's speech in agraphs while giving Geo. E. de Silva's speech full coverage.

There must be mixed feelings in this assembly in regard to the acceptance of the reforms by the Legislative Council. But I am sure no one will gainsay the fact that by the persistent efforts of this Congress we have been able to make a very distinct advance towards our goal which is to secure for the people of this country responsible government and the status of a self-governing member of the British Empire.

Remember that although we have this time made a very substantial advance, our goal has not yet been reached. Congress has led this country as close as possible to full responsible government as it is possible for it to do by its own efforts, but the final position could only be attained by the united efforts of all races in this country. I know there are some who feel that we are at this moment fit for full responsible government and any offer short of that should be rejected. But if you read the speeches of Congress leaders published in the Congress Hand-book you will see that they have all along felt that the condition precedent to the attainment of Full Responsible Government should be national unity. I will just read to you some extracts from the speeches of some prominent Congress leaders. The late Mr. H. J. C. Pereira who presided so ably over Congress deliberations [for] two years in succession spoke thus at the sessions of Congress in April 1923 :

> Communal representation is alien to any real movement for the true progress of this country. They would soon realise that the salvation of Ceylon depended not on the growth of communalism or racialism but on the growth of the true national spirit. Their object should be to secure progress in this country, political progress, which meant every thing for the country on true national lines. Let them all be united as one nation—the Ceylonese nation.

Then Mr. E. J. Samerawickrame, for whose opinion we all, I am sure, have the highest regard, said on the same occasion :

> It is too late in the history of the British Empire for tiny little Ceylon to expect the anomaly of anything like Responsible Government based upon racial repre-

Responsible Government at the next revision of th constitution had become a Congress Principle, why did no Congress, when it met in special session in September las year to consider the recommendations of the Donoughmore Commission, definitely say that it will not accept the scheme as Full Responsible Government had been denied them instead of resolving to accept the recommendations subject to certain modifications when those modifications did not make the scheme one of Full Responsible Government. These members of Congress who have resigned now owing to, as they say, Congress violating its principles, if they were really serious in what they say, ought to have resigned last year when Congress resolved to accept a scheme which fell short of Full Responsible Government.

No, ladies and gentlemen, the request for Full Responsible Government at the next revision of the constitution never will become a principle of Congress and Full Responsible Government has so far not become the irreducible minimum of the Congress demand. Since Sir P. Arunachalam in 1920 deplored the action of the Congress in not putting its demands high enough at that time, it has been the attitude of Congress to ask for more than what it was really prepared to accept, otherwise I cannot understand the action of these Congress leaders whom I have quoted who, being of the opinion that Full Responsible Government could only be granted to a united people, yet resolved in 1925, 1926 and 1927 to ask for it

Now, ladies and gentlemen, the Congress having by its resolution of September last year decided to accept a Scheme short of Full Responsible Government, it became a question, fter the Secretary of State had agreed to some of the odifications urged by Congress and after he had distinctly ated that no further modifications could be made, whether e Scheme as modified by him should be accepted or ected. In the absence of a Session of Congress to consider matter, the preponderating opinion of the associations iated to Congress, and they after all form the Congress, ccept the modified Scheme had to be taken as the rity view of Congress.

The resolution, therefore, of the Executive Committee of Congress requesting the Legislative Council to reject the Scheme could not be taken as the majority view of Congress. In fact decisions of the Executive Committee are not always taken as the majority view of Congress, as they are liable to be reversed, as had so often happened, in open session.

The charge has been made that Congress has violated its principles. I make bold to say that it has done nothing of the kind. It has not deviated one hair's breadth from its principles and I challenge anyone to prove, not merely to state, that it has. The aim of Congress is given in the first article of its constitution. That we have not deviated from that you all know. Then the late Mr. H. J. C. Pereira, than whom there has been no greater stickler for principles, stated in his presidential address in October, 1922 that the basic principles of Congress were first and foremost that the ultimate aim of this Congress was Home Rule within the British Empire. The Home Rule he said cannot be had for the mere asking, we have to work for it by slow degrees and Home Rule must come ultimately. The next basic principle was that this Congress has no religion or race. To these basic principes this Congress has remained true and means to remain true.

The demand for Full Responsible Government as I have pointed out to you could only succeed if made by a united people. The work before the Congress is therefore to bring about national unity as fast as possible. By the abolition of representation on communal lines in the proposed State Council our work has been made much easier than it would have been otherwise. It now remains with the people of this country to put away all petty racial, caste and religious differences and show such national unity as to make the demand for Full Responsible Government irresistible. When we next speak let it be as one country, one people and one voice.

It is very unfortunate that in the keenness of the contest between the Acceptionists and the Rejectionists of the Reforms some bitterness should have been caused in our

ranks and some of our most worthy stalwarts have tor themselves away from our fold. I am sure they have don so under a misapprehension which I trust I have succeeded in clearing and let us sincerely hope that they will re-consider their decision and join us again to complete the noble task on which this Congress set its heart 10 years ago.

Speaking as I do on this occasion as one belonging to the predominant race I would appeal to all my countrymen to work in such a way as to inspire universal confidence and to show a genuine desire to harmonise conflicting interests even at a sacrifice to ourselves.

Ladies and gentlemen, I have done, and it only remains for me now to call upon our President-elect to take the chair. Mr. George E. de Silva needs no introduction to any audience in Ceylon. He is a gentleman of the widest democratic sympathies, one who has always been to the fore in the onward march of the proletariat towards political freedom. A gentleman of tried worth and tested loyalty and one who shows much enthusiasm and great keenness in whatever he takes up, I have great pleasure in calling upon Mr de Silva to take the presidential chair.

Geo. E. de Silva's Presidential Address

Mr. Geo. E. de Silva then occupied the chair, after Mr. C E. C. Bulathsinhala had garlanded him, and delivered his presidential address, a Sinhalese translation being distributed among those present at the conclusion of the speech. He began his address with a tribute to the memory of the late Dr. C. A. Hewavitarne and the late Sir Geoffrey Butler and continuing said:

"Fellow delegates, the Congress meets today to consider he most momentous question which it has ever been called pon to solve during its career. You will remember that hen the Congress met in special session in September last ar it was for the purpose of considering the reports of special commission on constitutional reforms. On that sion the Commissioners' Report was subjected to the

most critical examination and the following resolution was passed :

> That the Congress, while expressing its grave disappointment that the Special Commission has not found it possible to recommend a scheme of full responsible Government and while reaffirming its demand for the same, is prepared to accept for the present the recommendation of the Donoughmore Commission, subject to such modifications as may be adopted in the subsequent resolutions.

As you are aware, the subsequent resolutions related to the executive, the franchise, the Governor's powers, the public services and the salaries commission. The Commissioners' recommendations were also lengthily discussed in the Legislative Council which passed a large number of resolutions on the subject.

Public Opinion

In June this year His Excellency the Governor submitted to the Secretary of State for the Colonies a very comprehensive review of the Commissioners' Report and the various opinions expressed thereon by the Legislative Council and other public bodies like the Ceylon National Congress.

In the light of those criticisms the Secretary of State for the Colonies made certain modifications to the original proposals of the Commission and outlined a scheme of reforms which he forwarded to Ceylon in October last year for consideration by the Legislative Council. In this despatch he made it clear that Council should either accept or reject the scheme as a whole.

Decision to Reject

At a meeting of the Executive Committee held on the first November, 1929, after a heated discussion, the following resolution was adopted :

> The Executive Committee of the Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that the Legislative Council should reject the proposed scheme of Reforms.

The question arose whether or not this resolution is binding on all members of the Congress. At a meeting of the Executive Committee held on the 10th of this month this question was raised by one of the members, and your President ruled that the resolution of the Executive Committee was not binding on members, it being the expression of a wish, a ruling with which I heartily agree."

Letter of Resignation

After contending that the right course open to the Congress Executive Committee was to refer the matter to the full Congress, Mr. de Silva continued:

"I cannot pass over the subject without referring to the letter of resignation which five members of the Executive Committee have addressed to the Hony. Secretaries, and which has been published in the Press. It is stated therein that all the members of the Committee who were present, with the exception of one dissentient, voted for the motion for rejecting the Reforms. The truth is that eight members including three ex-Presidents voted against it, while eleven voted for it.

It must also be noted here that it was generally understood among the members that the proposed rejection of the reforms was for the purpose of having the whole question referred to the electorates at a general election. It was believed that if the Legislative Council rejected the Reforms in the first instance, the Council would be dissolved, fresh elections held, and the scheme of reforms would be referred to the new Council a second time.

It is true that the Governor did make a suggestion to this effect in his Despatch but the Secretary of State did not adopt this sugggestion, as will be seen from the concluding passage in paragraph 24 of the Despatch. It is just possible that if the members of the Executive Committee realised at that time the full significance of that passage the resolution in that question would not have been passed at least in the form in which it was adopted."

Not Sacrosanct

"However that may be, it is absurd to contend, as some have done, that the resolution bound the members of the Congress to express no opinion contrary to it in regard to this most important public question which affected the welfare of the whole country. It is hardly necessary to point out that no such sacrosanctity had been claimed before this for the resolutions of the Congress Committee.

As a matter of fact, at least one of the very gentlemen who now are attributing disloyalty and treacherous conduct to those members of the Executive Committee who refused to be bound by the resolution in question, has on previous occasions disregarded the resolutions of the Congress Committee."

At this point Mr. de Silva proceeded to argue that Mr. E. W. Perera, in voting against the Colombo site for the Ceylon University, had contravened a resolution passed by the Executive Committee of the National Congress.

Accepted by Council

Reverting to the subject of the Reforms, he proceeded:

"Now let me turn to the present position. As you are aware, the Legislative Council after discussing the question for a number of days finally decided by a majority of two votes to accept the Reforms. This decision of the Council has profoundly affected the present situation. The question which we have now to consider is whether or not we approve of this decision.

In considering this problem, I would ask you to direct your attention to the one question that really matters, namely, whether the proposed scheme is better or worse than the present Constitution. In other words, whether the proffered Reforms mark a distinct advance on the present system of the [sic] Government."

Power of Initiative

After pointing out the defects of the present scheme, the speaker continued:

"On the other hand, the proposed scheme not only gives the power of initiative to the Council, but also transers to it the executive authority which is now entirely in the hands of the Government. To use the words of the Secretary of State, the proposed scheme 'gives the Ceylonese free institutions, direct responsibility and very considerable control over the internal affairs of the Island.' Furthermore the new scheme removes two of the most serious defects inherent in the present constitution, namely, Communal Representation and the Franchise limited to a very small minority of the people.

The abolition of communal representation will lay the foundation of that national unity without which the realisation of Self-Government becomes an impossibility, while the universal suffrage will enable the new Council to speak authoritatively for the whole country.

Scheme's Defects

When I speak of these distinct advantages, let me not be misunderstood as suggesting that the proposed constitution is free from defects and difficulties. In the first place the Committee system is admittedly an experiment. The Secretary of State has declared it to be such and so has the Governor. Difficulties may arise which we cannot anticipate now. If that happens, the remedy is in our hands. The elected representatives of the people will be in a position to demand the removal of such difficulties. And I have no doubt that the Governor will listen to any such request. On this point, it is gratifying to note that his Excellency the Governor has given a distinct assurance to the public.

Governor's Powers

Much has been said by the opponents of the proposed Reforms on the question of the Governor's Powers. Assuming for the sake of argument that reserve powers of the

Governor will be extended, what is the remedy? Under the present Constitution, the Governor today has the powers of veto and certification which really include every special power that can be reserved to him. The only remedy against the exercise of the special powers is to have a Council that can stand for the whole country.

One of the outstanding features of the debate in the Legislative Council was the fact that the representatives of the minority communities, except the Europeans, were on the whole opposed to the acceptance of the Reforms. It must, however, be remembered that the spokesmen of the minority communities almost without an exception strongly favoured the addition of communal representation. That being so, there should be no soreness felt by any minority community that the right of representation is denied to it.

In this connection I cannot but refer to the statesmanlike attitude maintained by the European Community who have, through their spokesman in Council and outside, expressed not only their willingness to surrender the right of special representation, but also their readiness to co-operate with the other sections of the people to make the new Scheme of Reforms a thorough success. They have not hesitated to declare publicly that they had confidence in the majority community and I have no doubt that the Sinhalese people will give an unequivocal response to the trust the European Community placed in them by acting not only justly but even generously towards the minority communities."

Home Rule

The speaker here expressed the hope that the delegates would sanction by their vote the acceptance of self-government.

"When Ceylon reaches Home Rule," he declared, "the people of this country will form one mighty nation and that mighty nation will throw forth its light into every

nook and corner of this Island and lighten the hearts of the humblest. Far better to live in an atmosphere of freedom than in a golden cage with clipped wings and muted voice."

Country's Needs

Dealing next with the needs of the country he said: "Let us now for a moment consider the country's most urgent needs wherein we may serve her and assist in her growth and development. Hand in hand with political advancement must go social regeneration. We must concentrate our energies on an islandwide campaign of social regeneration. We must carry to every home the message of our political emancipation and the lesson of every person's responsibility and duty when the country so badly needs the united strength of all her sons and daughters. They can and will step forth into the arena imbued with the knowledge of their power and responsibility and set their hands to the moulding of our destinies.

I earnestly appeal to every-one here today and to the whole country to establish in every home in this island the spinning wheel, the symbol of freedom, the medium of industrial independence. The spinning wheel will give occupation to the many thousands today who starve or live in crime and degradation. The spinning wheel will engage the mind of those who today are lost in the maze of fruitless chatter, idle gossip and wicked slander. The spinning wheel will be an instrument against temptation to sloth and sinful living. The spinning wheel will spin not only fabrics for our bodies and tapestries for our walls, but happiness and love for our homes that may still be perfect.

Incidence of Crime

The incidence of crime today is due to ignorance, idleness and the lack of occupation. For occupation let us offer the country the "charka" which if encouraged and developed will be an economic boon to this country.

For ignorance, let us offer the anti-dote of education. With the Donoughmore scheme an established fact today and the Ministry of Education in our hands, let us formulate a

syllabus and a scheme of education which will look beyond examination and seek individual realization. It is our bounden duty to fulfil the purpose of every man and woman in this country.

We have neglected industrial education. We have given no encouragement to industrial enterprise. Our ignorance in matters industrial is appalling and I appeal to you to introduce into the country a system of industrial education which in conjunction with our agricultural awakening must work for our redemption.

Our fields lie fallow, our lands lie idle or are in the hands of foreigners, our Island which was once the granary of the East today depends for its very food on Rangoon and India. We must give an impetus to agricultural activity and raise the cry of "Back to Land."

Today the results of our education are nebulous and our young men leave their schools with a number of certificates and without a purpose. Let us rather determine for them an object in life and provide them with a purpose which they can set out to achieve.

Racing Evil

Another source of misery to our homes and a cause of bankruptcy to our country is racing. It has grown to such proportions that immediate steps must be taken to check it. From a mere pastime, it grew into a profession and today it is a disease. Meretricious in its fascination, wicked in its lure, it is draining our homes and our country of our money which in diverse ways leave these shores never to return. It is our duty to call upon the government to forthwith remove this most potent cause of tragedy from our midst.

The debate in Council is over and the country is to be congratulated on the wisdom of its decision through its representatives. At this juncture, I think it would be proper for us to tender our congratulations to Dr. Drummond

Shields, one of the authors of this scheme, on his richly deserved appointment to the Under Secretaryship for the Colonies "

Mr. Martin sends a Telegram

The President asked the Secretary to read the messages received and Mr. Gunewardene repeated the contents of two telegrams received from Mr. C. S. Rajaratnam and Mr. N. J. Martin, both regretting their inability to be present, and wishing the deliberations all success.

Enquiry by Mr. G. K. W. Perera

Mr. G. K. W. Perera then asked a question. He wanted to know why five members of the Congress Committee had resigned as announced by both the Colonel and the President in their address. He wished to know the names of these members. If the Congress had given cause for their action, he should like to be told what it was. The members had been appointed to the Executive Committee by Congress and their resignation should be submitted to Congress in session.

The President replied that as no notice of the question had been given to the Committee he would ask the Secretary to be ready with a reply [the next day].

The First Resolution

Mr. G. C. S. Corea then moved the first resolution, which he said, had been widely enough discussed. If that resolution was passed by the Congress it must be clear that when the Congress gave its decision it could speak with an authority for the country. It had been a very regrettable incident that some of their most respected members had tendered their resignations. He would ask those members whether it was correct procedure for them to sulk at home and send in their resignations. The correct procedure would have been for them to come before the bar of public opinion —those who form the Congress—and get a decision from those assembled there instead of sulking at home.

Mr. Corea then proceeded to dissect the existing Constitution, which, he said, was very unsatisfactory and added: "Not all the resignations of people who imagine that by their resignation this Congress can be destroyed will hasten the end which they so much desire. The Congress is as much alive today as it ever was. With the dawn of a new era of political emancipation it will go from strength to strength, and be the means of attaining the much-desired end of 'Swaraj'."

The Gentlemanly Way

Mr. D. W. Subasinghe, in seconding the resolution, said that the Donoughmore scheme was a step forward in their political march. He made an earnest appeal for united action if they were to attain their goal. He was, he said, with Mr. Corea in all that he said about the merits of the scheme but he dissociated himself from his friend in the strictures he was pleased to pass on certain gentlemen who were esteemed members of Congress and who for certain reasons thought it best to sever their connection with it. The President too in his address made certain strictures which he thought was unfair on those members who were absent.

The President: "They were *Obiter dicta.*"

Mr. Subasinghe: "*Obiter dicta* or otherwise, I think it is not quite fair to pass strictures on absent people especially when these people happen to be the gentlemen who have been instrumental in taking a keen interest in working up the Congress.

I feel you will all agree with me when I say that the present position of Congress is to a great extent due to them. If for certain reasons they have severed their connection with Congress it is not fair for us in their absence to pass such severe strictures as both the President and Mr. G. C. S. Corea have been pleased to pass on them.

I must most emphatically dissociate [*sic*] myself from those remarks, especially of the President, who with more zeal then discretion referred to these gentlemen as

matricides. I beg to differ most emphatically from that. The common mother of us is not the Congress but Mother Lanka (cheers). The Congress was devised as a means only for the purpose of serving Mother Lanka."

The President announced that there was an amendment to the resolution by Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara, which would be discussed [the next day]. He declared the sessions of the Congress adjourned until [9 30 a.m. on the 21st.]

Second Day's Proceedings[1]

The deliberations began with an announcement by the President to the effect that Mr. D. B Jayatilaka had written, explaining his inability to be present that day owing to the illness of Mrs. Jayatilaka. The President requested those present to pray for her speedy recovery to health.

The Death Blow

The joint Secretary (Mr. R. S. S. Gunewardene) supplied the reply to Mr. Perera's query of the previous day regarding the resignation of certain prominent members. He read the letter addressed to Congress by Mr. E. W. Perera and four others and also the letter sent in by Mr. C. E Corea resigning from the Congress, and giving the reasons for doing so.

Mr. G. K. W. Perera asked the permission of the House to submit a resolution in connection with these resignations. He said that those gentlemen were intending to form another political organization. Congress possessed the power to censure any members who might have given

1. The proceedings were reported in the CDN of the 23rd December 1929, with the following headlines as supplied in the draft –

[illegible]

Silva in the chair."

cause for the secession and for any violation of tl
principles of the Congress. The proper course for tho
members who had sent in their resignation to adopt w
to have come to the Congress in session and stated the
grievance. As they had been appointed to the Executi
by the Congress, the Congress had the right to call for a
explanation from those who had erred, and after investig
tion to deal with the matter in the constitutional manne
He begged to move the following resolution with the pe
mission of the House:

> With reference to the resignation from this Congre
> tendered by six of its members, the said members l
> informed that improper conduct on the part of any
> its members has to be corrected by the censure of tl
> Congress; and that resignation on account
> misconduct on the part of others is selfish and n
> conducive to the public welfare; and that the sa
> members be requested, as the Congress value the
> co-operation, to reconsider their withdrawal, and
> they desire to represent to the Executive Committe
> the grievances they allege, that they may be dealt wi
> at a special session of the Congress.

Mr. F. A. Obeyesekere wished to know whether tl
procedure adopted by Mr. Perera in placing that resolutio
before the assembly was correct ? Mr. Perera said it wa
an unwritten law that in cases of emergency standin
orders might be suspended.

The President said that according to the rules of tl
constitution no resolution could be placed on the Congre
agenda unless it had been submitted beforehand to th
Executive Committee. He would, however, place the matte
before the Committee during the breakfast interval an
inform Mr. Perera of the decision.

Colonel's Point of Order

Mr. Perera insisted that there were certain matters
importance which could be dealt with without the permis

Col. T. G. Jayewardene: "I rise to a point of order. The President has given his ruling."

The President upheld the point of order and requested Mr. Perera to resume his seat.

Mr. Perera: "My question has not been answered."

The President: "My ruling has been given. Will Mr. Perera resume his seat?"

Mr. Perera then resumed his seat.

Acceptance for a Period

Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara then moved the following amendment to the first motion moved by Mr. G. C. S. Corea the previous day:

> This Congress re-affirms its demand for Full Responsible Government at the next revision of the Constitution, but pending such revision recommends the acceptance for a short period of the proposed Donoughmore Scheme of Constitutional Reforms as modified by the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Speaking in Sinhalese, Mr. Kannangara said that he was entirely opposed to the original motion, and his amendment put forward a plan which would be more useful to them. He left it to the meeting to adopt or reject it. From the earliest days of the Ceylon National Congress its sole and ultimate object was the attainment of Swaraj as soon as possible.

Back-sliding

At that time the Congress was respected and feared by the powers that be, but of late the term "Swaraj" was being forgotten and some went so far as to say that the word "Swaraj" was an illusive term "used by everybody who was not serious about what he said." The aim of the Ceylon National Congress was to secure for the people of

Ceylon " Responsible Government and the status of a self-governing member of the British Empire." The Donoughmore Commissioners said that the people of Ceylon tried hard to become masters in their own house. Swaraj meant becoming masters in their own house. He hoped that they would neither be afraid of using the term or forget that they wanted Swaraj at the end. The President himself had said he would not accept the Presidentship of Congress unless they get Swaraj. He wondered whether Swaraj had now been attained that the new President had accepted the office. They need not be afraid of using the word Swaraj. Let them call it Full Responsibile Government or Self Government. It was the same. Even His Majesty the King had used that term in relation to India.

Never Get Swaraj

If they accepted the Donoughmore scheme for all time, they would not get Swaraj in a hurry. He emphasised the fact that if they did not obtain Swaraj from the Labour Government there was very poor chance of their getting it from any other Government. He, therefore, felt that they had made a mistake in not asking for Swaraj straightaway. If they desired to accept the reforms as they stood, however, he would advise them to make it perfectly clear that they did so only for a short period and only as a step to Swaraj. He made the suggestion and those who wanted to speak against that ....

A voice: " How many ? It was only two that went against it. "

Mr. Kannangara: " I am prepared to answer any questions. I came before you to make known my wishes before the Congress which represents the *mahajana mathe* " (voices were heard from different parts of the hall).

The President : " Don't interrupt the speaker ! "

A voice : " Taking the ruling from the chair ! "

Mr. Kannangara : " Thank you. That is what I am doing. "

14 out of 128

Continuing, Mr. Kannangara said that at the Executive Committee meeting which decided on accepting the Donoughmore scheme only 14 out of 128 members representing the affiliated Associations were present, besides the President-elect who wanted acceptance of the scheme from the very start. Those who did not agree resigned from Congress. That was why, he said, if they were to accept the reforms, it should only be for a brief period. There was no responsibility attached to anyone and if mistakes were made nobody knew on whom the blame would be placed. He repeated that it would be a calamity if they accepted it at once, but he would earnestly appeal to them if they were going to accept it, to accept it for a short period and not forget the aim in view, Swaraj in a year or two. That thought should be uppermost in their minds. He analysed some of the statements made in the report of the Donoughmore Commissioners and quoted the words of Col Josiah Wedgwood at the Tower Hall some years ago to the effect that self-government was the birthright of the people and that though the people of the West Coast of Africa were not yet of age he had no hesitation in coming to the conclusion that in Ceylon the people were undoubtedly of age, and were therefore, entitled to their birthright. He concluded with quotations from Mr. Ramsay MacDonald's speeches made in Ceylon and also from Sir Hugh Clifford who had expressed that opinion that, provided the minority interests were safeguarded, there was no reason why Full Responsible Government should not be given to this country from January next. That statement was made in May, 1927.

Mr. V. S. de S. Wikramanayake, speaking in Sinhalese, seconded the amendment. He did so in the hope that Mr. Kannangara, who was against the acceptance of the reforms, would now throw in his lot with those who accepted it and work harmoniously with them. The speaker quoted Disraeli to the effect that a statesman should be prepared to serve his country according to its present necessities.

Continuing, Mr. Wikramanayake said that Legislative Council had accepted the reforms, and there was no use in the Congress now passing a resolution that they would accept it. He, therefore, advised them to accept the amendment instead, since it was more to the point.

Invitation to Mr. E. W. Perera

Mr. F. A. Obeyesekere also spoke in Sinhalese, and paid a tribute to Mr. Kannangara. He said that if there was any member who had been regular at Congress Executive meetings or Legislative Council meetings, that man was Mr. Kannangara, and his opinions were respected everywhere. *He was not one of those rogue elephants who had* left Congress, but he was prepared to remain in Congress and co-operate with Congress, although personally he was opposed to the acceptance of the reform. Mr. Obeyesekere advised others who were of the same opinion as Mr. Kannangara to do as he did and to work the reform scheme willingly, since it had introduced into the country the principle of manhood suffrage.

Mr. Obeyesekere said he regretted that they had lost Mr. E. W. Perera, who had always been one of the most earnest workers for Congress. If Mr. Perera would withdraw what he had said in his letter to the Press, Mr. Obeyesekere said Congress woud be only too glad to welcome him back to their fold. Since the majority in the Council and in the Congress were in favour of the acceptance of the reforms, he hoped Mr. E. W. Perera would rejoin the Congress and work with the majority.

Continuing, Mr. Obeyesekere said, Mr. Kannangara need not remind them of Swaraj, since that was the chief aim of Congress.

A Willing Co-operator

Mr. G. K. W. Perera asked what difference there was between the original motion and the amendment. Was there any doubt that they were out to obtain "Swaraj?" Everybody knew it, and there was no need for them to keep on repeating it.

Some papers, he said, had said that today would see the death of Congress. That was not so, Mr. Perera said. Today they were going to be resurrected with a new spirit.

Continuing, he said that many people had said that the Reforms had many unsatisfactory features. He had read the numerous speeches against the scheme in and out of Council, but he had not been able to discover what were the really objectionable features of the scheme. One fact that emerged from the speeches against the reforms was that some members of the Council were so constituted as not to be able to work harmoniously in committee. They were headstrong men who wanted to impose their will on everybody and were incapable of submitting [*sic*] their own views in the interests of the majority.

He personally was willing to accept the constitution which had been offered.

Sanctity of Concience [sic]

Mr. Simon Abeywickrema said that although seven Mahajana Sabhas in the Galle District had asked Mr. Kannangara to vote for the acceptance of the Reforms, he had stated that he would vote according to his conscience. Were the people who had ignored the mandates of the people and worked according to their own conscience the men to ask for Swaraj ? However, they would show him no ill-feeling.

Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya spoke in support of the amendment. There was a bad habit, he said, among Sinhalese, when in a controversy, to descend to personal attacks. There must always be a difference of opinion in all matters of public interest. Such differences tended to the bettter elucidation of facts ; Congress had had for years one goal in view—full responsible government, as stated by Mr. Kannangara. They should not forget that. He was in entire agreement with Mr. Kannangara's amendment.

Mr. W. Sathasivam, who spoke first in Sinhalese, but soon changed into English, said he was against the acceptance of

the reforms, but since Congress was for it he would cooperate with them. But he still clung to his opinion that there was not even a shadow of self-government in the Donoughmore scheme.

A Mussolini System

Mr. Sadris Silva opposed both the amendment and the original motion. There was no purpose in a resolution which said that they should accept something which had already been accepted. Those who acted according to their own wishes and scorned the mandates of the people were not working for Swaraj, but for a Mussolini system of government.

Mr. P. Givendrasinghe said he was not only opposed to the grant of the vote to the Indians, but he was also in favour of driving the Indians out of Ceylon.

The President had always been in favour of the grant of the vote to the Indian, but now he was bitterly opposed to it. He (the speaker) did not know why the President had changed his mind. Perhaps it was due, the speaker suggested, to some personal motive.

The President rose to say that he would have asked Mr. Givendrasinghe to sit down, but for the fact that he knew that what Mr. Givendrasinghe was indulging in was mere "hot air."

Mr. Givendrasinghe: "That is unparliamentary language."

Mr. Givendrasinghe then resumed his seat.

Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa, supporting the resolution, said that those who were opposed to the Committee system should not enter the new Council.

Mr. A. A. de Silva wished to know what the limit of a short period was, a month, a year, or more?

Mr. Kannangara replied that he left the measure of time to the Congress to decide.

Mr. D. S. Senanayake said that here was no difference between the original motion and the amendment. Swaraj was a form of self-government. He could ask them to accept the amendment.

Mover In Reply

Mr. G. C. S. Corea, the mover of the original resolution, replied to the points raised. He said it was a great pleasure to him to see Mr. Kannangara co-operating with them. He had always looked up to Mr. Kannangara in political matters, and the only matter in which they did not see eye to eye was in the matter of the reforms. He very gladly withdrew his motion in favour of Mr. Kannangara's amendment.

Mr. Kannangara said he had always worked in keeping with the ideas of Congress. Congress had all along stood for complete self-government.

The amendment was passed, only one delegate voting against it.

The meeting then adjourned for lunch.

On resuming after lunch at 2 p.m., when the House was still sparser, even the platform being almost deserted,[1] the President announced that the Executive Committee had decided that Mr. G. K. W. Perera's motion on the subject of the resignation of five members of the Executive should not be put to the meeting.

Land Tenure

Mr. W. Sathasivam then moved the following resolution:

> The Ceylon National Congress urges the government to give effect without further delay to the final recommendations of the Land Commission.

It was a question that vitally affected the country, said the speaker, and many had laboured and failed over it. If the British people had failed in their rule in Ceylon, it was in that one respect, and they had failed ignominiously. It was a story of exploitation for the benefit of the Britisher.

1. Refeeg ence to a sparse gathering was crossed out.

The speaker next detailed the recommendations in the Land Commission's report and paid a tribute to the members of the Legislative Council who had laboured over the production.

Mr. A. W. H. Abeyesundere, seconding the resolution, said that if there was anything for which the members of the Legislative Council were worthy of praise and the gratitude of the country that was the Land Commission's report and the Mortgage Bank proposal. The early operation of the recommendations of the Land Commission would be a great blessing.

An Amendment

Mr. G. K. W. Perera was in favour of postponing the resolution for about nine months or so when the new constitution would come into operation. Before adopting a resolution of that kind, he said they ought first to read through the whole report and make sure that there was nothing in the recommendations which was not acceptable. Speaking of the alienation of land, he said that a square foot of land ought not to have been made available to outsiders. The Britishers grabbed the country's lands and thus obtained all the wealth produced. When in future, the opportunity came they must see that nothing of that sort happened.

The speaker moved as an amendment that the Government be requested to defer giving effect to the recommendations of the Land Commission until the new Constitution comes into operation.

Mr. O. B. de Silva seconded.

Mr. Sathasivam accepted the amendment which, being put to the house, was carried unanimously.

Educating The Masses

Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya next proposed that

> The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that steps should be taken to organise evening or night classes

throughout the country with a view to ensuring that all adults, both male and female, should achieve literacy as early as possible.

Mr. Amarasuriya said that that resolution was most opportune. It was the duty of every member of the Congress to take upon himself the task of imparting education to his less fortunate brethren.

Mr. O. B. de Silva, seconding the resolution, said that the recommendations of the Donoughmore Commission were based on the possible capacity of the Ceylonese to govern the country. This question of education was a supreme challenge to the Congress. That was the task that was presented to Congress. If Congress was not equal to it, it would perish, but it was not willing to perish. They would realise that an uneducated man was a dangerous institution. Mr. Jayatilaka had said that with organised effort they could educate the whole country within ten years. It was for Congress to bring that about.

Representatives and Voters

He pointed out that if the representatives of the people broke away from the will of the people they would become a menace. That supreme issue had come before them and the only way they could settle that issue was by educating the public. So that there might be no second say as to whether the representatives of the people should follow the will of the people.

Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa spoke in support of the resolution.

The Chairman appealed to the members to make a firm resolution to give practical effect to this question.

The motion was unanimously carried.

Congress Constitution

The new scheme of the Congress Constitution, as approved by the Executive Committee, was adopted on the motion of Mr. M. H. Jayatilleke which was seconded by Mr. R. S. S. Gunewardene.

22. TWELFTH ANNUAL SESSIONS, 12-13 DECEMBER, 1930

22 : A. MINUTES OF THE SESSION

A summary[1] of the proceedings of the twelfth annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held at the Town Hall, Kandy, on the 12th and 13th December, 1930.

The Chairman of the Reception Committee, Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, welcomed the delegates and called upon the Hon. Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara, the new President to occupy the chair. The President then delivered his presidential address. In the course of the presidential address the gathering rose to its feet at his bidding to honour the memory of Sir James Peiris and Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan.

Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike then moved the following resolution :

> The Ceylon National Congress, realising the advantages of cotton growing, spinning and weaving, resolves to take all steps necessary actively to encourage them throughout the country.

Seconded by Dr. S. Muttiah. Supported by Messrs. J. S. P. Jayawardene, W. A. de Silva and V. S. de S. Wikramanayake. Carried unanimously.

Mr. G. Robert de Zoysa proposed the following resolution:

> The Ceylon National Congress urges on government the urgent need of establishing a State Mortgage Bank, with the least possible delay.

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1. A notice of the agenda for the twelfth annual sessions found among the documents is not printed because all the resolutions noted therein are restated in the Minutes. There is one exception. An amendment to the Congress constitution which was to be proposed by P. Givendrasinghe and seconded by Darrell J. J. Peries was not presented. It read :—

"That Article 2 of the Constitution shall read as follows :—

The Ceylon National Congress shall consist of (a) The All Ceylon Congress Committee ; (b) District Congress Committees ; (c) All persons who shall satisfy Article 3 of the Constitution."

Sessions were declared adjourned for the next day a[t] 8.30 a.m.

On the next day the proceedings began with the election of the Executive Committee. [Here follows a list of members of the Executive Committee which we have reproduced elsewhere.]

The discussion on the resolution regarding the establishment of the State Mortgage Bank was continued. Mr. O B de Silva seconded the resolution. Messrs. A. W. H. Abeyesundere, K. Chanmugam and Geo. E. de Silva supported it. The resolution was then passed unanimously.

Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya proposed the following resolution:

> Pending legislation on the lines recommended by the Donoughmore Commission the Ceylon National Congress urges on Government the amendment of the Village Communities Ordinance in order to secure its more effective working, particularly in the following respects:
>
> (a) The provision that Village Committees should have only unofficial Chairmen.
>
> (b) The amendment of the provisions regarding the relations between Village Committees and the Government, with a view to securing greater freedom of action for Village Committees within legitimate limits.
>
> (c) The amendment of the provisions referring to the Committee with a view to securing a fair representation for all the villages in the division.
>
> (d) Power to the Village Committees to appropriate revenues accruing from licenses for guns, vehicles, brick kilns, cattle and other animals, tapping of toddy, etc.
>
> (e) That where there are Village Committees, Village Tribunals should be abolished and their jurisdiction referred to in section 56 be vested in the Village Committees.

Seconded by Mr. D. H. S. Nanayakkara. Supported by Messrs. D. Alagiyawanna, F. A. Obeyesekere and Edwin Gunasekera. Adopted unanimously.

Mr. G. K. W. Perera proposed the following resolution:

> The Ceylon National Congress approves of the immediate introduction of an Income Tax into Ceylon and calls upon the Councillors who are Congressmen to vote for its immediate operation when it comes up for consideration.

Seconded by Mr. L. B. Hippola Banda. Messrs V. M. Guruswami, K. Kumaraswami and Mackenzie Perera (visitors) obtained the permission of the President to speak and they opposed the resolution. The resolution was supported by Messrs. W. Sathasivam, D. S. Senanayake, F. A. Obeyesekere, W. A. de Silva and V. S. de S. Wikramanayake. Carried unanimously.

Mr. R. S. S. Gunewardene proposed the following resolution:

> The Ceylon National Congress authorises the Executive Committee to take steps to prevent contests between Congress members and to support members of Congress as against non-Congress candidates in the forthcoming State Council elections.

Seconded by Mr. N. de Alwis. Supported by Mr. C. E. C. Bulathsinhala. Carried unanimously.

Mr. V. S. de S. Wikramanayake proposed the following resolution:

> The Ceylon National Congress views with disapproval the neglect of Government to take adequate steps to effect retrenchment in its various departments and in view of the present unsatisfactory nature of the finances of the country urges that steps be taken to effect retrenchment especially in regard to establishment charges.

It was seconded by Mr. D. J. Wimalasurendra. Carried.

Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa proposed the following resolution:

The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion in view of the serious nature of unemployment among Ceylonese workers that legislation should be passed to restrict immigration of labourers from other countries to Ceylon.

Seconded by Mr. G. H. Albert Perera. Carried unanimously.

Mr. Geo. E. de Silva proposed the following resolution:

The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that the importation of foreign liquor should be checked by the imposition of higher duties.

Seconded by Mr. D. Alagiyawanna. Carried.

Mr. W. A. de Silva proposed the following resolution:

The Ceylon National Congress, while reiterating the terms of resolution No. 3 of December, 1929, urges that Government should take all steps necessary to secure a larger cultivation of paddy.

Seconded by Mr. G. C. S. Corea. Carried unanimously.

Mr. R. S. S. Gunewardene, the Joint Hony. Secretary, on behalf of the Congress thanked the Reception Committee for the hospitality provided, the Kandy Muncipal Council for the free use of the Town Hall, and Mudaliyar N. Wickremaratne and the ladies of Kandy for entertaining the delegates.

The President after thanking the delegates for their presence and the interest they had taken in the deliberations declared the sessions closed.

R. S. S. Gunewardene,
Jt. Hony. Secy.

22 : B. Draft Report on the Sessions

The twelfth annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress opened in the Kandy Town Hall [on the afternoon of the 12th May]. The President and delegates arrived by the morning train and the Reception Committee accorded them the traditional Kandyan welcome. They were taken in procession with elephant and dances to Dharmarajah College. Lunch was served here and the delegates were taken in procession to the Town Hall, which filled as the meeting progressed, and a crowded house accorded an ovation to Mr. Kannangara when he began his presidential address. In the course of his address the gathering rose to its feet at his bidding to honour the memory of Sir James Peiris and Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan.

Among those present on the platform, besides the President, Mr. C. W. Kannangara, were : Lady Dias Bandaranaike, Messrs. W. A. de Silva, D. S. Senanayake, F. A. Obeyesekere, A. C. G. Wijeyekoon, V. S. de S. Wikramanayake, D. C. Senanayake, G. K. W. Perera, G. C. S. Corea, H. W. Amarasuriya, C. Bulathsinhala, Robert de Zoysa, Wace de Niese, Dr. S. Muttiah, Messrs. J. N. Jinendradasa, W. A. B. Soysa, D. J. Wimalasurendra, N. de Alwis, L. V. B. de Jacolyn and R. S. S. Gunewardene (Hony. Secretary).[2]

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1. Except for E. A. P. Wijeyeratne's speech, the report is based on a handwritten draft which has been prepared as a newspaper report(C.N.A., 60/8S). There is some unnecessary repetition in some of the opening lines, virtually the same thing being said in two different paragraphs. One or two para graphs have therefore been omitted. The list of those on the platform has been extracted from a latter part of the draft.
Even the headlines have been provided in the draft and read thus :

Congress Session Opens in Kandy
President's Review of its Vicissitudes.
Has Congress Changed ?
Plan to enforce Party Discipline on Congressmen

This report appeared in the *CDN*, 13 December 1930.

2. The same names are listed in the *CDN*, 15 December 1930, together with the following : "Mesdames W. A. de Silva, C. E. Corea, G. E. de Silva and D. M. de S. Abeynayake."

E. A. P. Wijeyeratne's Address[1]

Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, the Chairman of the Recepti Committee, in welcoming the delegates, said:

"Fellow delegates, brethren in a common cause!

On behalf of the Reception Committee of the Ceylor National Congress it is my proud privilege to welcome you to this historic stronghold of the hills. Being on the eve of a momentous period in the annals of our Island, and within sight of the promised land of National Independence for which this Congress has worked so unceasingly, it is but fitting that we should now hold our sessions here at Kandy—for it was in this very city within a stone's throw of this very hall a similar convention gathered a little more than a century ago to hand over the destinies of this country to the temporary safe-keeping of a foreign ally. It was Paradise Lost in 1815—let us hope that we shall be able to say that it is Paradise Re-gained in 1931.

I have just said that the Congress has striven for our political emancipation. I do not think it will be out of place here to remind ourselves of the struggle in which this Congress was engaged, amidst the tumult of the present awakening, during its brief career. Born out of the womb of the miseries of 1915, sponsored by the greatest son of modern Ceylon, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, with the help and co-operation of the truest and the noblest Ceylonese of every community, the Ceylon National Congress came into being just eleven years ago. Within one short year of its existence it had the courage to reject with scorn that "Mosaic" Constitution sponsored by the Manning regime. It was able at a later stage to send in, to the Legislative Assembly, a band of its chosen people charged with a definite mandate and in obedience to that mandate its representatives in Council were able to make a historic gesture by walking out of that very chamber as a protest

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1. As printed in a leaflet. See C. N. A., 60/87. The newspaper report of his speech, while including some sections of the printed version, is more concise, omits some sentences, and also records occasions where applause was generated.

against obdurate bureaucracy. It has survived first, the ridicule and later, the hatred, of its opponents and finally extorted the reluctant recognition both of the Government as well as of those who had remained beyond its pale. It has been [so] staunch to its ideals of true democracy that it feared not even the possibility of disruption in its own ranks. Twice in Colombo and once in this very city its Presidents, and through them this same Congress, refused with scorn to sacrifice its principles as a means of bringing within its fold those who had seceded from its ranks. Thereby it has achieved within the short space of its existence three of the main purposes for which it had been striving—the abolition of the cancer of communal representation, the freedom of the franchise and the attainment of crossing the frontier of responsible government.

Of the two years that have immediately preceded I need hardly say anything except to make this passing reference to the Donoughmore scheme of reforms. The Congress is entitled to claim that it was due to its unceasing efforts and its campaign carried out both in this country and in England that we are today on the eve of a great experiment. I am one of those who felt from the beginning that the New Constitution with all its obvious defects was worth a trial, so that we may be able, after a period of actual practice, to co-ordinate public opinion for a demand for full responsible government. Whilst on this subject I wish to express my regret that Sir Herbert Stanley, who more than any other shaped the whisperings round the throne in regard to the Donoughmore scheme, will not be with us to watch the progressive development of this country under the New Reforms. I am not one whose faith in the success of peoples' efforts in self-governing institutions, especially in Ceylon, is in any way dependent on the personality of a Colonial Governor. It is however a consolation to know that he will be succeeded by one who is not a stranger to our Island. Those of us in the Congress cannot but be aware of the service which Sir Graeme Thomson rendered both to the Government and to the Congress itself by acting as the mediator between his obstinate chief and the exasperated

leaders of the country; for it was due to the personal effo of Sir Graeme Thomson, who was the Colonial Secreta in 1920, that the compromise to which I have alluded w brought about. Let us trust that Sir Graeme Thomson wi deal with the new impulse in our political life with sympa thy and understanding, that he will be able to place a dignified restraint on the somewhat garrulous and patronising tone which has recently been adopted by the second in command. We are determined that we shall no longer accept anything in the shape of largesse at the hands of the Britisher. The question of equality between the Ceylonese and the Europeans, whether it be in the Civil Service or any other department of life, had passed beyond the stage of academic discussion and in the words of a former President, "The appetite of the young lion of democracy will no longer be satisfied by mere verbal pabulum."

It is but fitting that in recording its achievements and its triumphs that we should pause to pay a tribute to one who is no longer with us, who stood by with steadfast loyality at the time of the struggles and the travail of those earlier years. In all humbleness and sustained courage, Sir James Peiris gave a lead for several years to the public life of this country as represented by the Congress and brought it to a position of security and triumph and like the prophet of old was able to bring us within sight of the promised land of political freedom. One of the mildest among the children of men, he yet possessed, paradoxical as it may seem, a high degree of courage — courage that made him reject with contempt the pretence of Reforms in 1920, and a yet greater courage a few months later to force upon his restive followers the compromise which he had effected with a bureaucratic government beaten to its knees. I would also like to refer to one who is as great or even greater, though his connection with the Ceylon National Congress was not so abiding as that of Sir James. In Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan this country has lost the last of the great Victorians. Massive in his eloquence, dignified, urbane and cultured he lived on to an age where he stood

alone— a calm rock in a world of flux and froth. He has gone, but he has left the memory of imperishable achievements. Of both these men I can only say in the words of Pericles in his funeral oration over the fallen Athenians "They are dead but they will live for ever in the hearts and minds of men."

What I have said of the past of the Congress is only of historical importance. We ought to be more concerned with the solutions we can offer to the challenge of the present; and when I am dealing with this aspect I trust that you will pardon me if I attempt to lay bare a few of the defects which retard its effective progress. I take it that the primary object which the founders of this Congress had in view was the welding together, for a common political purpose, the various communities which have made this Island their home. But to-day the Tamils, the Muslims and the Burghers and even a large section of the Sinhalese are not numbered within its fold. I am sure that with a little statesmanship and with the charity, which is a characteristic of our common heritage, we should magnetise these various and important groups which have yet refused to combine with us. Can we not show them that beyond the self-satisfaction of communal security the summits of a mightier vision can gleam around them—the vision of a united Ceylon? The Kandyans at least have expressed a willingness, through one of their spokesmen, of joining hands with the rest of us for a common political purpose and I trust that the Congress will not fail to accept the hand of loyalty and fellowship that is held out by them to the rest of the country across the hills. May I express the humble hope that over the grave of the warrior who fought for the Sinhalese in the tragic year of 1915 these two great communities, the Sinhalese and the Tamils, should resolve to perpetuate his memory, not in statues of bronze, not in tablets of marble, but rather by cementing that political unity for which he worked and struggled throughout his unique career. When you shall have achieved this object of bringing under the banner of the Congress these various communities in your midst you shall be able to claim,

without any possibility of that claim being challenged, th this Congress is representative of every section, of ever community, of every race and of every religion in this Island home of ours.

Another defect which I cannot but comment on is a lack of adequate organisation within the ranks of the Congress itself. If we are to take our rightful place in directing the country's policy in the future, we should have powerful and vigorous branches throughout the Island, controlled and directed by the central body—all loyal to one another and converging to a common purpose. The chief difficulty in my opinion is the lack of any binding link, and the absence of any common life between the Congress and its affiliated associations. The result is that although at present we have over a hundred societies so affiliated to us, these same societies are scarcely influenced in any important particular by the mind of the policy of the Congress.[1] The ideal we should strive for should be somewhat similar to the perfection which has been secured in the pictures of the early Italian Renaissance where a golden light pervades the whole work. It is in the air, in the grass, it is in the eyes, the hair, the very flesh of the figures portrayed; and this aura of golden light Congress must shed over its component parts down to the smallest and the least of its affiliated associations throughout the country.

The last and in my opinion the greatest defect is the lack of discipline in our own ranks. Whether it be Congress men in Council or outside Council, or our constituent associations, seldom do they think it necessary, except perchance to serve the sordid purpose of a moment, to abide by the principles of Congress or the policy laid down by the central committee. We on the other hand have not been willing nor have we been able to impose our sanction on those who have lapsed so often and with such impunity. No party, no movement worthy of the high purpose which e claim, can distil gold except in the crucible of remorse- ss discipline. There is no alchemy save the alchemy of

[1] This sentence has been reproduced exactly as it appears in the leaflet.

loyalty. There can be no continuity save the continuity of service. Time has ceased for mere academic politics. If we are to take our rightful place in the new scheme of things the mere passing of pious resolutions must definitely cease. Work, practical work, organised, unified and above all disciplined work—that alone must be our battle-cry.

My last duty is a pleasant one: that of welcoming the new President of the Congress. Mr. Kannangara is succeding one who has loyally and zealously served the cause of the Congress, one who in the face of the greatest personal disappointments, has never looked back but as cheerfully worked for the country's political progress. The Congress will remember with affection the personal enthusiasm and whole-hearted devotion of Mr. Geo. E. de Silva. Mr. Kannangara is a worthy successor to the band of great men who have held this exalted office. On his ability, sincerity and restless energy and above all on the genuineness of his humility we place our hope. We feel that in this momentous crisis in the life of the Congress and in the political development of our country he will guide our destinies safely, surely and successfully.

Ladies and gentlemen, the President will now address you.

C. W. W. Kannangara's *Presidential Address*

Mr. C. W. W. Kannagara, after thanking them for the honour done to him in electing him President, referred to the dissensions within the Congress which he compared to a ship whose officers were fighting with one another and whose crew were flying at each other's throats. Under these circumstances he appealed to them in the true spirit of healthy sport to resolve that whatever decision was recorded by the majority to abide by it, the minority loyally and faithfully accepting that decision as its own in the real manner of every constitutional body of its name.

Sir James Peiris

Before coming to the business of the session he would offer a special tribute to the memory of Sir James Peiris and Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan, by whose demise the country had at once been plunged into the deepest gloom. Sir James, the accomplished scholar, the keen student of political science and economics, the eloquent speaker, the pure patriot of glowing zeal, and above all, the spotless citizen of boundless simplicity, and the ideal leader respected by every community, has passed away. We cannot help feeling how much learning, how much piety, how much winsome tenderness lie buried in the grave of Sir James Peiris. He was President of the Congress during the second year of its existence, our guide, philosopher and friend for many a long year and an accredited representative and mouth-piece more than once at Downing Street and Queen's House He urged the reform of the Constitution before most other leaders thought of it. His strong representation for a more equitable system of taxation and the [*sic*] local university are known to all. A champion of Social Service he did his work unostentatiously and not for honour of reward. He scornfully rejected the official overtures made to him to desert the cause of his Buddhist brethren who were grievously wronged during the riots of 1915. In every public question he always boldly stood by his principles and convictions in the manner of a truly great statesman, and his memory will always remain with us, reminding us and the generations to come, of his great and unselfish career, stimulating us by his example and urging us to leave our footprints, however slight, on the sands of time.

Sir P. Ramanathan

Ere the tears shed on the death of this great patriot were dry there passed away amid universal lamentation the Sage of Sukhastan, the ablest man of his age. In the death of Sir Ramanathan Ponnambalam we mourn the greatest politician and the cleverest debater we have known. He combined with his matchless eloquence and silver tongue a wonderful grasp of great politicial and economic problems that stood him in good stead whenever he directed his ruthless

invective against the blundering policy of the Government. The official hierarchy stood in constant terror of this masterful personality and friend and foe alike paid full homage to his unchallenged supremacy. For full half a century he practically dominated the public life of this country. We miss in him the great lawyer, the profound scholar, the keen educationist, the tireless worker and above all the able champion of the rights and liberties of the people. The service he rendered to the Sinhalese Buddhists during the dark days of 1915 can never be effaced from the hearts of all of us. To the down-trodden and oppressed that sought his aid, his hand was always stretched out in succour and his powerful voice raised to redress their grievances and condemn the wrongdoer. But that mighty hand which everybody was glad to clasp is vanished, that voice which everybody was glad to hear is still. If to live in the hearts and memories of those we leave behind is not to die, then Sir Ramanathan is not dead but liveth. True, he no longer lives in his own person, but he lives in us and will live on in those who succeed us, enjoying an immortality which is not given to all the sons of men. He invited the gathering to rise for a moment in mournful silence as a mark of respect to the memory of those and other worthy sons of Lanka with whom the Congress had been associated.

Loss of Faith in Congress

Resuming, Mr. Kannangara referred to those "friends and sympathisers" who felt that the public had lost faith in the Congress and that the Congress had lost its hold on the people, whilst hostile critics with malicious delight assert that "this great national asset" was like a sinking ship and not even the political rat would board it. He reminded them of the noble gesture made by T. L. Villiers, the European Urban Member of the Legislative Council, when he stated on an important occasion only a few months ago that though the Congress had run into stormy waters, he could not but have great respect for the National Congress, and expressed the hope that some guiding hand would bring the National Congress together. It was only men who knew the value of cemented action, men who were not prepared

to gloat over another's fall, be he friend or foe, men wh[illegible] were glad to see even a political opponent prosper. [illegible] of justice and fair-play, that could give expression to senti[illegible] ments such as these. Communities or individuals might have chosen to separate from the main body, not prepared to take the decision of the majority and carried away by an honest conviction that they were always right and the others were wrong and as a result of an unsuccessful attempt to impose their will on others. But they had never paused to contemplate the damage they were unwittingly doing to the cause of the country. They forgot the truth of that homely maxim, "United we stand, divided we fall". Mr. Kannangara's prophetic vision already discerned the return to Congress of her wandering sons. He saw the re-union of estranged friends and communities, and heard the voice of united Lanka demanding from the powers that be, her just birthright of Full Responsible Government.

Congress Has Not Changed

What hindrance was there to the fulfilment of this vision? Did they think that the Congress had changed? "I say, no. Men may have changed but not Congress."

The founder of the Congress, that great champion of Constitutional Reform, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, had defined the aim of Congress to be to secure for the people of Ceylon Responsible Government and the status of a self-governing member of the British Empire. The enthusiasm displayed by its founder elicited a ready response throughout the country and the leading men of every community in every town, Burghers, Tamils, Muslims and Sinhalese, fraternised in their common endeavour to revive the national life and to increase the national prosperity of their country by obtaining the right of free citizens, and, even as a first instalment a fair share in the control of the administration and dictating the policy followed by the Government. It was urged by the Government as a slur on the representative character of the Congress that it is composed of what are called the educated natives of

Ceylon. But the Government of Sir William Manning realised to its cost in December 1920 the representative character of the Congress and the hold it had on the masses of the people.

Mischief Making

The local Government much distressed at the prospect of a united Lanka openly assumed the role of mischief maker and threw an apple of discord. Suspicion entered and, terrified beyond measure by the nightmare of Sinhalese Rule and Low Country Domination, they wandered away from the fold, thereby setting at rest, at least for the time being, the fears of the Government. Though diminished in representative character as regards the races and communities that inhabit this Island, the Congress increased in numbers, with affiliated associations all over the country, and continued its work with loyalty and devotion until the same cause that brought disruption between the communities that composed the Congress also threatened to bring dissention and discontent into the ranks of the individual leaders themselves, namely the division of the spoils. The Congress adopted at this juncture a policy of drift, indifference and non-interference. This was the root cause of the trouble that culminated in the sorry spectacle that was displayed before the Donoughmore Commission of Congress leaders, forgetting the aims and objects of Congress in their anxiety to exhibit a greater degree of sweet reasonableness and a more sober judgement that their fellows, and giving evidence of a most damaging character to the cause of the country. Each man practically became a law unto himself and each affiliated association assumed a role of independence quite contrary to the letter and the spirit of the Congress Constitution.

The Bogey Men

Here again as regards the representations made by the various communities the bogeys of "Sinhalese Rule" and "Low-Country Dominion" did their full work and the commissioners, though unable to resist the demand of the main

body of the Congress for Full Responsible Government, were able to hang on to these bogeys and recommend a constitution with the novel Committee system as its chief feature and the pill of the Governor's unqualified right of vote over the whole range of administration and legislation, the elusive nature of the seat of responsibility for the policy of the Government as a whole or of any individual Committee, and the removal of the public services from the usual control of the Ministers made delicious and attractive by a thick sugar-coating of abolition of communal representation and adult suffrage. It was not his intention to analyse this pill into its various ingredients and comment on their proportion, for it was swallowed by the country just a year ago. It took some time well nigh in [sic] six months to indicate its sure and steady effect on the patient. He was then seized with a delirium manifesting itself in violent gesticulations, writhing about both friend and foe alike and more terrible and painful to behold than even the worst cases at Angoda. He is subject to delusions of a very serious nature which paint every bush a bear, every friend a foe, every visitor an intruder and every speaker a possible rival, every woman an old acquaintance, every man his dearest friend. He was ever restless, hopping about from seat to seat, everything he saw just sufficient room for him, he was in perpetual motion with attendants well trained to their job to keep up his spirits and refill his pockets. He suffered from grossly exaggerated ego, he imagined he was the agent if not the superior of every man. He was fit to rule a Kingdom and without him this country and its people were doomed to destruction. But above all he had lost his memory and the pledges he had taken and given. The two words "Income Tax" had a very curious effect on him.

He feared the Broker, Planter, Merchant and Chetty might reduce him to bankruptcy. He was first wasting his means, mortgaging his properties, selling up his assets and ruining his finances and his independence of character. There was really no doubt that the patient was getting beyond control and beyond all redemption.

Responsibility of Congress

For this unfortunate state of affairs the Congress had to assume full responsibility. Beyond laying down our objects and aims the Congress had hardly done anything to make its influence felt in the country and maintain discipline within its own ranks and establish firm control over the network of organisations spread over the country professing affiliation, but had left them to drift as they like at the sweet will and pleasure of every man who posed as leader, every criminal and every adventurer. Once the policy was dictated by the National Organisation and decisions on questions of vital importance arrived at by majority vote during the sessions, the affiliated associations should have, with the strictest loyalty, adopted those decisions and the central committee itself adhered to them and seen them faithfully carried out, not only by the far-flung affiliated members but also by themselves, the most prominent as well as the least import [*sic*]. It failed to adopt proper constitutional procedure with regard to the affiliated associations and with respect to the members of the central committee in the attitude to be adopted by them on the most important question they had to face in their generation, the acceptance or rejection of the Donoughmore Constitution. The Executive Committee arrived at a certain decision. The affiliated associations in the various constituences were left to decide as they wished, some in accordance with the decision of the committee, others diametrically opposed to it. There was also the further point raised whether the decision of the Committee was in accordance with the earlier decision of the special sessions of Congress in slightly different circumstances. This was a hopelessly complicated state of affairs and statemanship failed to give a clear and definite mandate from Congress to its followers in the Legislative Council. An extraordinary session in that grave emergency should have settled the issue, but it was held a week after the members had recorded their votes in the Council. Instead of the horse being put before the cart and made to draw it, the Congress put the cart before the horse and permitted the horse to follow the cart ; the Legislative

Council decided the question on the 12th day of December, 1929 and the Congress armed the members with its decision on the 21st December, 1929.

Was it humanly possible in circumstances such as these, to avoid misunderstanding and hasty conclusions, dispel suspicion or prevent discussion ? Everyone who accepted the scheme was attracted by ministership and fat salaries, and everyone who rejected it was a traitor to the Sinhalese ! Could mutual recrimination go any further ?

Problems of Future

Problems of vast magnitude and far-reaching effect are awaiting solution, Income Tax, Immigration, Ceylon University, Local Government, Drink, Agriculture, Irrigation, Industries, Land Settlement, Personal Proprietorship, Mass Education, Unemployment, Workmen's Compensation, Crime Prevention, Mortgage Bank, Retrenchment, Power Development and several others. These required the services of the best brains in this country. The opinions of such men should be co-ordinated and the Congress should act as a party with one policy to achieve the best results That policy should be framed and dictated by men actuated by the same motives and inspired by the same noble aspirations to reach that promised land of Full Responsible Government. In a large and representative gathering like the Congress, differences of opinion were inevitable. Quarrels only showed their strength and indicated the vigour of life, not decay. He had already dealt with the aims and objects of the Congress. Then what excuse was there for these separations and desertions ? Did they think that any who had left us have any reason to be proud of their achievement ? Petulance was not manliness. There was a well-known maxim in law that every man is presumed to foresee the onsequences of his own acts. Were the faults and indisretions of even the most prominent and the most influenal members of Congress a sufficient excuse for anyone to reck and ruin this noble handiwork of man so happily nceived by that great patriot Arunachalam, so wellnned, fashioned, completed and equipped by him. and

19799 (75/03)

his equally distinguished co-patriots, James Peiris, H. J. C. Pereira, C. E. Corea, D. B. Jayatilaka, E. W. Perera, G. A. Wille, E. J. Samerawickrame, F. R. Senanayake, Francis de Zoysa, W. A. de Silva and others too numerous to mention, and in more recent times George E. de Silva, A. C. G. Wijeyekoon, and a host of ardent workers ? The Congress had brought them from darkness to light and placed them on the road to the land of Full Responsible Government and freedom, and in the words of Colonel Wedgewood " you have got to pull this thing off by unselfishness, by concentration and by being all for your country. "

There was now no use of crying over spilt milk, for weal or woe they were committed to the Donoughmore Constitution. To attribute the basest of motives to other people *might be a very enjoyable pastime, but what good did it* do to the cause of the country, how much nearer did it take them to the land of freedom ? It would rather put them further back and cause irreparable damage.

Example of India

He asked all true sons of Lanka to look across the Ocean and see how the noble and heroic sons of India were dying and suffering in jails and penal settlements for the sake of the Bharatha Matha. What sacrifices ! and for what purpose ! He asked them to consider the memorable words of the saintly Mahatma:

> In India there shall be no man or woman or community that shall be excluded from the promise and the reality of that freedom when it comes. I need an army to battle but my soldiers are drawn from every rank and race, not by the measure of their chest, not by the height, and not by the strength of their arm, but the feeblest and the oldest, and the lowest and the most illiterate may come and be the chief among my soldiers: for my only standard of measurement is a devoted heart and the power to sacrifice and be true.

Ceylon expected great things from Congress. The whole Empire was watching the changes coming over the Constitution. A great responsibility rested on their shoulders.

Should they not rise to the full realisation of their duty? The noblest heritage which we could leave to our children and our children's children was the heritage of rights and liberties safeguarded by the devotion of and emancipated people.

Income Tax

The first resolution had been submitted by the Executive Committee and pertained to a subject of the greatest importance at the present time and one which was bound to be one of the chief issues at the forthcoming elections whether they were going to be held under the present constitution or the long expected State Council. A political crisis of the first magnititude was precipitated last Tuesday by the decision of the Legislative Council to side-track and postpone the coming into operation, if at all, of the Income Tax Ordinance which had passed through the Council at its second reading. The opponents of Income Tax, it was to be said to their credit, worked their campaign in a manner *so thorough and far-reaching as to elicit the admiration of* the whole of Ceylon. Work such as that was capable of accomplishment only with the power of the Almighty rupee, and a good portion of that rupee, which was going to be taxed, flowed freely in the protection of the vested interests that have withstood this form of taxation successfully during the past twenty-eight years. The campaign was well organised. The Rupee Company, the sterling shareholder, the Broker, the Bank Manager, the Shroff, the Planter, the Capitalist, the Money-lender, the Merchant, the Chetty and the Borah and the Indian Trader joined each other in friendly embrace to prevent the Exchequer from receiving its just due out of the profits of the exploitation of the country and its people. The Congress and the various institutions representing the native interests of the country, their leaders and public men had for more than a quarter of a century past clamoured for the imposition of an Income Tax.

An Unjust Incident

The system of taxation prevailing in the country was indirect and well-recognised to be unfair, unjust and inequitable. It violated all the up-to-date causes [*sic* ?] of taxation and bore very heavily on the poor man. Practically every civilized country in the world had an Income Tax, very often in addition to several other taxes, and a modern form of tax on incomes is the central feature of every well-balanced system of taxation. The Income Tax Ordinance that was introduced into the Council exempted tax on small incomes for several reasons. It would have been difficult to collect, expensive and also unjust to the poor man as it would weigh very heavily on him. It proposed to levy tax on assessible [*sic* ?] incomes of over Rs. 4,800 per annum during the first three years of its operation and over Rs. 2,400 thereafter. The chargeable rates are five per cent on the first Rs. 6,000, 10 per cent on the next Rs. 30,000 and 15 per cent on the excess over Rs. 36,000. The standard rate in England was 45s in the £ or 20 per cent, although besides the Income Tax there are in England a Super Tax, an Estate Duty, a Legacy and Succession Duty, Stamp Duty, Inhabited House Duty, Land Tax, Excess Profits Duty, Corporation Profits Tax and Land Value Duty.

Further, in Ceylon only 2 per cent of the income earners would pay tax, those earning between Rs. 4,800 and Rs. 20,000 would pay from 1 to 5 per cent and only those earning about Rs. 60,000 will pay as much as 10 per cent.

The greatest argument in favour of the Tax was that they shall annually get from the United Kingdom by way of transfer a sum of nearly six million rupees. In the long run they would get from non-Ceylonese interests a sum of about 10 or 11 million rupees and themselves would pay nothing.

Apology For Government

Income Tax was sought to be imposed by the government as this juncture not because it was anxious to take money from the pockets of Europeans and other non-residents and

transfer the same to the Ceylon Exchequer but because of the need of further money to carry on the administration.' If they could carry on till 30th September, 1931 why should the Ordinance come into operation from April, 1931? For the very good and same reason that unless the Ordinance was immediately passed, it would be utterly impossible to get the department ready and train its officers for the collection of the Tax as from 1st October, 1931. The proposal to postpone consideration of the Tax owing to there being two vacancies in the Council is on a par with the other tactics employed by the capitalists and other underlings against the imposition of an Income Tax. Did Mr. Hawes imagine that the Governor to whom that wonderful petition was sent was a fool or the Vice-President to whom he appealed was a confounded idiot? The consideration of these matters and the meteoric appearance of Mr. Natesa Aiyar would give them sufficient food for thought as to the causes that had precipitated a crisis and the guiding principles of conduct of the elected unofficial members of the Legislative Council.

Discipline For Congress Men

He questioned the conduct of the members of Congress, who voted for the government. Messrs. Kotalawala and Wijeyekoon, two members who still professed allegiance to Congress, voted at the last moment and sought refuge in the other camp. He was not sure of the political convictions of the first or whether he was still a member of Congress, but Mr. Wijeyekoon was one of their most prominent members and was President of the year 1928. Mr. Wijeyekoon, perhaps being a member of the Executive Council too, had very good reason for his strange behaviour, but that was matter which had to be left unfortunately to his electorate o settle with him, for they did not yet have in Congress real arty formation to enable them to take disciplinary easures against those who deserted them in the hour of al and make [sic] a public example of them, however high

The draft has an additional phrase which has been deleted. It reads: "even difficulty in the year 1931-32 and the impossibility of getting money injustice and iniquity on the poorer classes of our people."

placed, who should dare to trifle with their political associations and the public conscience of this country. Before he closed he offered his sincerest congratulations to his Excellency Sir Herbert Stanley and Lady Stanley in [*sic*] the high post of responsibility in the empire to which his Excellency had been appointed, and also to His Excellency Sir Graeme Thompson [*sic*] and Lady Thompson [*sic*], old friends of Ceylon, on Sir Graeme's selection as Governor of the Colony, and he assured them that a hearty welcome awaited them on their arrival next year.

In conclusion Mr. Kannangara said: "Now it is only left to me as President of this great national gathering assembled in this historic city, renowned for its natural beauty, climate and surroundings, noted for the generous hospitality of its people and their chiefs, hallowed by the tread of the last defenders of the independence of a long line of illustrious kings, sanctified by the priceless Relic of Gautama, the Great Sakyamuni, and consecrated for all ages by the blood of that noble and heroic child, Ehelapola Madduma Banda, who cheerfully offered himself to the hands of the dreadful executioner to set an example of courage and bravery beyond parallel in the history of the world, to exhort you, my fellow delegates, to be prepared at this juncture of great national importance to obey the mandate of Congress and be ready to fall in at the post of duty and make sacrifices, however dear or valuable they may be, not for personal fame or honour, but for the sake of this thrice-blessed land of our birth, for the fulfilment of our hopes and aspirations, and for the salvation and freedom of our people."

The delegates were at this stage entertained to tea by the ladies in Kandy, after which Mr. Kannangara spoke in Sinhalese and scored a great triumph.[1]

1. In the draft, the three paragraphs that follow appear immediately after the Presidential speech. However the resolutions on cotton growing, etc. are presented later on with the introductory note "After the Presidential address the following resolution was . . . ." It would seem that the resolution on cotton growing as well as G. Robert de Zoysa's presentation of the motion on the State Mortgage Bank occurred after the tea-break on the first day, though the draft gives the superficial impression that it was on the second day.

A resolution favouring the income tax was deferred for tomorrow.

The following message received from Mr. D. B. Jayatilaka was read: "Deeply regret unable to attend Congress meeting owing to indisposition. Sincerely hope delegates will realise the true significance of the vote in the Legislative Council on the income tax ordinance and decide upon adequate measures for fighting against the threatened domination of capitalism, mostly alien, over the public affairs of Ceylon."

After the presidential address[1] the following resolution submitted by the Executive Committee was the first to be considered:

> The Ceylon National Congress, realising the advantage of cotton growing, spinning and weaving, resolves to take all steps necessary actively to encourage these throughout the country.

Charka and Takli

In proposing the resolution, Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, speaking in Sinhalese, said that the two most important factors which united to form a self-supporting country were dress and food. Owing to this deficiency, particularly, India was reckoned the poorest country in the world with Ceylon as its immediate second. If Ceylon imported its staple need, rice and its cloth, how could Ceylon be spoken of as rich? In 1929 it imported cloth to the value of Rs. 4,700,000 and in 1927 to the value of Rs. 4,500,000.

This could be overcome by the Charka and Takli. During the time of King Parakrama cotton had been grown; hence such names of places as Kapukotuwa and Kapugoda. In three or four hours 2,500 yards of cloth had been woven to be offered to eighty Bhikkus during Parakrama's time

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[1] [illegible]
at [illegible]
pr [illegible]
se [illegible]

Every process from cotton growing to weaving must be done here, and this would be possible since cotton can be grown in most parts of the country. Even at present Hambantota had yielded 3,200 cwts of cotton in 1929 and Matale, Badulla, Maho and Anuradhapura had yielded smaller quantities. A family of five, concluded the speaker, could clothe themselves for one year with the crop of sixty trees, and the plain dress woven by the Takli would inculcate a sense of humility in one and all.

Unemployment Remedy

Dr. S. Muttiah who seconded the resolution commended its acceptance as a solution to the unemployment problem. That spinning and weaving were, in the past, a home industry practised by everybody irrespective of caste or race, was clear from references in religious literature and the record of travellers. The poet, Kabir and the philosopher, Thiruvalluver wove; the sacred thread of the Brahmin was spun in his own home by himself. The art had, however, decayed owing to the competition of the machine-made products.

Extant Nucleus

Dr. Muttiah commended the Taklis to ladies in place of the crochet needle. The Charka and Takli, he continued, were already in use in Jayawardenapura, Galle, and Jaffna among other places. In the north, he said, it had been taken up seriously, Lady Ramanathan being one of the pioneer followers of the Mahatma. There was a nucleus in the All-Ceylon Cotton Spinners Association where Mr. Jayawardene worked. Mr. Jayawardene and his family had lived for months in the Ghandi [*sic*] Ashram and the whole family had dedicated themselves to the work. They had done wonderful work since they started in July 1928, and among their pupils, a government servant had, out of three plants grown near the Fort Station, made a cloth for himself, while a couple had been married in clothes made by their own hand. Government had recognised the usefulness of the work and ordered Charkas, Spindles, and Taklis from

the institute. In giving effect to the resolution, concluded Dr. Muttiah, they would achieve not only their economic but their political and spiritual salvation

Demonstration

Mr. J. S. P. Jayawardene, speaking also in Sinhalese, took a Takli and demonstrated how it could be used while engaged in conversation He also cited as an example the work done with the Takli by Miss Adeline Ameresekera of Katanpahuwa who had produced 62,000 yards of thread from cotton in 45 days

Messrs. W. A. de Silva and V. S. de S Wikramanayake supported the resolution, which on being put to the meeting was carried unanimously

State Mortgage Bank

Mr. G Robert de Zoysa proposed the next resolution (also submitted by the Executive Committee) which was as follows:

That the Ceylon National Congress urges on Government the urgent need of establishing a State Mortgage Bank with least possible delay.

The subject of a State Mortgage Bank, he said, had been discussed at almost every session, but up to now nothing had been done. "We must do it ourselves; no one else would do it for us," he said. There was not a single rich man in Ceylon today who was not involved. Ceylonese were indebted to the Chetties for mortgages alone to the extent of a hundred lakh of rupees.

Further discussion on the resolution was deferred till the next day) and Congress rose at 7 o'clock.

The Second Day's Proceedings[1]

A feature of the second day's sessions of the National Congress at Kandy, and one not provided for in the agenda, was a debate on the Income Tax consequent to the President allowing opponents and non-delegates to address the gathering.

Interesting information regarding the prevalence of the charka cult in Ceylon was given in the course of a discussion on a resolution advocating the active encouragement by Congress of cotton growing and manufacture as a home industry.

Second Day's Session

Kandy, Dec. 13.

The Congress reassembled at 9 o'clock this morning. There was as good an attendance as (the day before). Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara, President, was in the chair.

Besides a resolution approving the immediate introduction of the income tax, resolutions were passed urging (1) the establishment of the State Mortgage Bank with the least possible delay ; (2) retrenchment specially in establishment charges ; (3) legislation restricting immigration of labourers ; (4) the imposition of higher duties on foreign liquor to check its importation, and (5) steps for larger cultivation of paddy.

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1. This is our own title derived from the opening line of this section of the draft. There appears to be some confusion in the draft, however, in recording the events of the first day's and second day's proceedings. A section which close examination indicates to have been part of the first day's discussion appears, in the draft, after the two paragraphs printed below. It is only thereafter that the section entitled "Second Day's Session" can be found in the draft. The second day's proceedings appeared in the *CDN* of the 15th December 1930 under the following headlines :—

Animated Close of Kandy Congress
Cotton Industry to be fostered
Income Tax Debate
Need for State Mortgage Bank and Cheap Money.

State Mortgage Bank

Proceedings opened with Mr. O. B. de Silva seconding the resolution proposed yesterday by Mr. Robert de Zoysa, viz: "The Ceylon National Congress urges on Government the urgent need of establishing a State Mortgage Bank with the least possible delay."

Mr. de Silva said that the ordinance was being drafted so that the resolution was urging [sic] Government not to delay it any longer. The bank could be started at this juncture under happy auspices as money was available cheap. The last loan had been raised at four and a half per cent, though previously the rate had been six and five and a half per cent, because the people of this country had at last realised that there was more in these loans than met the eye. This was the opportunity to start the bank if it was to be run on debentures. He read somewhere that in America money rates had dropped to two per cent. There were a very few people able to get at [sic] six per cent from the Savings Bank.

Stimulus To Industry

If money was available at five per cent it would provide a most efficient stimulus to industry. If Ceylonese industry was wanting it was not due to the lethargy of the people but the brake applied from above. While the European who set out to develop the country was able to get money at 4 or 5 per cent the average Sinhalese or Tamil had to pay, if lucky, 10 per cent and, if he went to Sea Street, 15 per cent. This was because there was a large body of middlemen through whom it had to percolate. Money always started from the Government and in the process of percolation it gathered interest till it came to 15 per cent when it passed out of the Chetty's hands. Thus Ceylonese development was arrested while a stimulus was provided to the European. The State Mortgage Bank would provide the corrective for this. It would borrow on debentures from abroad at 4 or 5 per cent and issue to Ceylon borrowers at 7 or 6 per cent.

There was one trouble about the State Mortgage Bank as proposed, that it was going to help only a certain class of people. The principal objection that had been taken was that Government could never assess land values in this country with any degree of accuracy, in the case of rubber for instance. But there was scope for lending on city properties, which had a stabilised value. Government could make safe investments in these and by these means money could percolate to other properties.

If Government was honest about its intentions this was the time to start the bank. Throughout the world industry was yielding small returns and money was being offered everywhere at decent interests. If Government was playing the game by them this money could be applied for starting the bank. No Ceylonese money was wanted and no Ceylonese could lend out at 5 per cent. He would not deal with details except to say that the provisions should be liberal and that the small man should be given a chance.

Mr. A. W. H. Abeyesundere, seconding in Sinhalese, said that the bank would lend money only for agricultural purposes and that to finance trade and industry a Co-operative Town Bank should be established as suggested by the Committee of the State Mortgage Bank.

The three most advantageous features in the State Mortgage Bank were, continued the seconder,

(1) The maximum rate of interest would be 9 per cent per annum and the minimum rate of interest six and a half per cent per annum;

(2) loans could be repaid half-yearly either by instalments or by equated payments;

(3) as the original funds of the bank were to be raised by the issue of debentures, each debenture being for Rs. 50 and bearing interest at a rate to be fixed at the time of issue, people with savings would have gilt-edged securities in which they could invest their money.

Plea for Unity

Mr. K. Shanmukam supported the resolution. From a view of the activities in other countries he said that the State Mortgage Bank was very necessary for the upliftment of the agricultural and peasant population of the country. Safeguards should be provided to see that money was not lent out to develop tea and rubber. The Bank's primary concern should be the peasant farmer and the small land-holder. As regards its management, the officers should not be imported, rather should they be recruited from the best brains in the country. Proceeding to explain why he spoke at the Congress, Mr. Shanmukam said: my community is practically out of the Congress. Nothing great can be achieved by the Congress unless every community and creed unite and pull together. Otherwise we shall be a servile nation. We should all unite and see that the Congress is a real power in the land, able to dictate terms to the Government. Even when the foreign power is displaced by a National Government let us hope the Congress will be a force to be reckoned with.

Mr. Geo. E. de Silva said that although they had been agitating so much Government had not fulfilled any real single need of the country. In all foreign countries he had been in, he had seen a State Mortgage Bank almost in every town and in every street.

The resolution was then passed unanimously.

Village Committees

Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya then proposed:

Pending legislation on the lines recommended by the Donoughmore Commission, the Ceylon National Congress urges on Government the amendment of the Village Committees Ordinance in order to secure its most effective working particularly in the following respects:

(a) The provision that Village Committees should have only unofficial chairmen.

(b) The amendment of the provisions regarding the relations between Village Committees and the Government, with a view to securing greater freedom of action for Village Committees within legitimate limits.

(c) The amendment of the provisions referring to the Committees with a view to securing a fair representation for all villages in the division.

(d) Power to the Village Committees to appropriate revenues accruing from licences for guns, vehicles, brick-kilns, cattle and other animals, tapping of toddy, etc.

(e) That where there are Village Committees, Village Tribunals should be abolished and their jurisdiction, referred to in section 56, be vested in the Village Committees.

Mr. D. H. S. Nanayakkara, in seconding, said that it was a paradox that Mr. W. L. Kindersley, who had said some time ago that there was none fit to be a Village Committee Chairman expect the *Mudaliyar* of the place, was contesting a seat in the State Council.

Mr. D. Alagiyawanna said that petty cases such as S. P. C. A. cases, and cases arising out of deficient weights and measures should be dealt with in the Village Committee and not in the Police Court.

Mr. Forrester Obeyesekere supported the resolution which was adopted unanimously.

Income Tax

At the afternoon session today, a resolution was passed approving of the immediate introduction of an Income Tax into Ceylon, and calling upon Councillors, who were members of Congress, to vote for its immediate operation when it comes up for consideration next week.

The resolution was debated at length, the President giving an opportunity to non-delegates to speak against the Tax. The reply of the mover and the speeches against the Tax alone were made in English: the rest of the proceedings were in Sinhalese.

Before speaking on the subject, Mr. G. K. W. Perera said he wished to inform the audience of the abusive handbills that had been circulated by a certain party against the President. This was, he said, mean and cowardly, and if anyone was annoyed about the reference made by the President to the voting in the Income Tax Bill, he should have pointed it out fearlessly. The resolution, he continued, had been mentioned in the Congress Agenda, solely for the purpose of showing that the Congress wished the passing of the Income Tax Bill.

After comparing indirect taxation to an injection given by a dentist, before extracting a tooth, to dull the pain, Mr, Perera said that it was most annoying to hear it said that the Income Tax would affect the poor man adversely. Those who would be affected were the rich men, and foreign companies, and estate owners. It was, he said, a just tax in that it taxes the profits of the rich men. During the good old coffee days foreigners, chiefly Britishers, flocked into Ceylon to invest the money they had bagged from India and then there was no tax like this. That was why the evil remained up to this day. Perhaps the "Up Country Folk" may have shown great love for them (laughter). The suggestion that the Government should sell crown lands and make the money it needs, he described as a puerile argument.

The Case Against

Some visitors wishing to speak against the tax, the President gave permission. The first to come on the platform was Mr. K. Kumaraswami.

The burden of Mr. Perera's speech, said Mr. Kumaraswamy, had been a general expression of resentment against their being misled. He (the speaker) did not think Mr. Perera

or the Congress would ask Government to impose the tax on the country at a time of such stress as the country was going through now. Mr. Perera would appreciate the suggestion that the mere establishment charges in respect of the collection of the tax would eat up the major portion of what was collected. In asking them to vote for the tax, Mr. Perera, argued the speaker, was really inviting the Englishmen here. There was already Mr. Huxam [*sic*] here and for the establishment of that gentleman a number of other experts would be imported from England or abroad because at the crucial moment no Ceylonese would be found qualified to assist him, and that would throw open the door to bribery and corruption as had been suggested in the Legislative Council itself.

Passing on of Tax

The principal argument against Income Tax was, to his mind, the danger that it would be passed on, and Mr. Kumaraswami illustrated his point as follows: A borrower who could not get a loan from a Bank would have to go to the Chetty. The Chetty got his money from the Bank, say at 9 per cent. and gave it out at 15 percent. With the Income Tax in operation the Bank would charge the Chetty 10 per cent and the Chetty in turn would take it out of him by raising his rate to 18. In this case who paid the Tax: the Bank, the Chetty or the borrower?

Unemployment

That the Income Tax was going to increase unemployment was clear to him from the plight of England which had the biggest roll of unemployed. Employers would reduce their staff—nobody was philanthropic—and everybody would take it out of everybody else. Loss of business brought about by higher prices was another possible cause of unemployment.

The slogan was "We are going to tax the foreigner," and the speaker wished to know who would take the place of the foreign capitalist if he withdrew with his capital on

finding that the return from it had been reduced He could see no grant of the remission of import and export duties with the imposition of the Income Tax.

Reply to Objections

Referring to the arguments urged by Mr. Kumaraswami against income tax, Mr. W. Sathasivam said that he had asked some questions which sounded like "Who is the better, General Wellington or Napoleon ?," a question so often debated in his school-boy days and of which they never saw an end. This is an age of democracy. Aristocracy is Government by the rich and payment by the poor but it was vice versa with democracy; and the Income Tax is quite in accordance with democracy. His argument that the present depression had to be taken into consideration before the imposition of an Income Tax was not maintainable because this depression not only affected Ceylon but the entire globe. Two years ago a new bank was opened in Ceylon and he asked the manager, "how much money did you bring from England ?" but the answer to that was, "nonsense—not a cent. We only take your money and give it to your people on interest." This would illustrate how *Ceylon had become a paradise for the foreign money-maker.* It must be checked by the Income Tax alone.

Further Opposition

Mr. V. M. Guruswamy, another visitor, spoke against the Tax and suggested that the existing forms of taxation should be thoroughly investigated before the Income Tax or any other tax was introduced.

Mr. Mackenzie Pereira, another non-delegate, was speaking when Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike rose to a point of order. He asked whether it was right to allow non-delegates to speak seeing that it was a Congress resolution. Besides time was being taken up by the discussion and there other resolutions on the agenda.

Only Delegates to Vote

The President said he was only giving an opportunity for the other side to place its case before the assembly. No other non-delegate would be allowed to speak and only delegates would be allowed to vote on the resolution.

A Voice : "There are enemies in your camp."

Unnoticed Arrivals

(During the debate, unnoticed, a large crowd of traders and businessmen, mostly Indians, Chetties and Bombay cloth merchants, had occupied seats in the hall and much whispered conversation was in progress).

A man from the body of the hall rose after the President's remarks and expressed a desire to speak.

The President : "Are you a delegate ?"

The heckler : "No."

The President : "Then please leave the hall."

The man left the hall. Mr. Mackenzie Pereira concluded his speech and the President permitted another visitor named Sumanasekera, who had sent up his name earlier, to speak. He got on to the platform and began to make quotations.

The President asked him to keep to the point while the audience began to interrupt his remarks with calls to order and to speak to the subject.

Mr. Sumanasekera got down from the platform and left the hall complaining of the burking of discussion.

The President warned visitors against breach of order and order was soon restored.

Certificate of Mr. Huxham

Mr. D. S. Senanayake, dealing with Mr. Kumaraswamy's objection as regards the cost of the new department, said that not even a fish could be caught without giving it a bait.

They would have to spend Rs. 50,000 and they could derive Rs. 15,000,000. As regards Mr. Huxham, he said, "If there ever came an expert to Ceylon to report on a Ceylon matter there never came a greater expert than Mr. Huxham." Though he may not be of the best class in England there could be no question as to his ability.

Mr. W. A. de Silva described some of those who argued against the Income Tax as the "devil's council." The Europeans had at one time wished to get the expert to the Island but now that he is there they would not even deign to sit at dinner with him.

Mr. F. A. Obeyesekere and Mr. V. S. de S. Wikramanayake also spoke.

Mr. Perera's Reply

Mr. G. K. W. Perera, replying in English, said he wished to prevent misunderstanding between himself and the Kandy advocates who appeared against them. In the first place there was misunderstanding as regards capital. The suggestion had been made that it should be bodily brought here and deposited in the banks. Capital was a thing that could accumulate here, it was a matter of accounting in books. What was meant by the statement that capital would leave the Island and would no more enter the Island was that we would not be able to sell our produce. It was impossible to contemplate such a position. If we could sell our produce capital would accrue and as we consumed luxuries so also would capital accrue.

Mr. Perera said it was wrong to say that the last loan was obtained on advantageous terms. It was because our security was good, so that loans even at lower interest could be raised.

Chettiar's Motives

It was difficult, he said, to explain why Chettiars opposed the tax without offending them. They paid a large rate in India and whatever they paid here they would get back

in India. But they opposed the tax, they retained lawyers to oppose it and they had attempted to bribe Councillors to oppose the tax. Unless he was doing them an injustice he feared that it was because if they paid the tax here the proper state of their finances would be revealed and they would be no longer able to send false returns. He would ask them not to trust people who sprang up like mushrooms when their self-interest was at stake, but to trust the Mahajana Sabhas, the Congress and the Labour Union who also were engaged in serving them.

The President referring to the cable sent to the Secretary of State about "the Income Tax defeat of Government" asked why these people worried about it, if it could be passed on. People came to him to dictate about his vote but being a poor man, and so, under no obligation, he was able to thwart their intentions. They lost the resolution in Council postponing the enforcement of the tax by one vote, and to vote on the Bill Mr. Natesa Iyar came back from hiding, Mr. Wijeykoon went back on his opinion, and Mr. Subramaniam was brought by force to vote for it. He (the speaker) and Mr. Senanayake were kept busy day and night preventing others being got at.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

Next Election

Mr. R. S. S. Gunewardene moved:

> The Ceylon National Congress authorises the Executive Committee to take steps to prevent contests between Congress members and to support members of Congress as against non-Congress candidates in the forthcoming State Council elections.

Mr. N. D. Alwis seconded and Mr. C. E. C. Bulathsinhala supported. Carried unanimously.[1]

1. Reference to the Minutes will indicate that the report is not complete. Unfortunately the newspapers do not make-up for this omission.

23. THIRTEENTH ANNUAL SESSIONS, 18-19 DECEMBER 1931

23 : A. MINUTES OF THE SESSIONS

A summary of the proceedings of the thirteenth annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held at the Ananda College Hall on the 18th and 19th December, 1931.

The Chairman of the Reception Committee, Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya, welcomed the delegates and called upon Mr. S. W. R D. Bandaranaike, the new President, to occupy the chair The President then delivered his presidential address.

Mr. J. Jayawardene then moved the following resolution :

> The Ceylon National Congress resolves to accept and give effect to the report of the sub-committee appointed to consider the propagation of spinning and weaving in Ceylon.

Mr. D. Alagiyawanna seconded. Carried unanimously.

Mr. R. S. S. Gunewardene proposed the following resolution :

> That the Ceylon National Congress is of [illegible] steps [sic] be taken by the Executive [illegible] the creation of a National Fund.

Mr. W. Sathasivam seconded. Carried [illegible]

Sessions were declared adjourned [illegible] 8.30 a.m.

On the next day before the [illegible] of the Executive Committee [illegible] gress was held to consider [illegible] G. C. S. Corea to resolution [illegible]

> While being prepared [illegible] re, fair trial, the Ceylon [illegible] opinion that [illegible]

working and that a revision of the Constitution be made within a period not exceeding three years in order to secure a full measure of responsible government.

The amendment was put to the vote and carried.

Then the proceedings began with the election of the Executive Committee. [The minutes provide a list of the members elected. The list has been printed elsewhere].

The meeting then proceeded to consider the Articles of the new constitution of the Congress. An amendment to alter the age entitling a person to membership in the Congress to 18 years instead of 21 years was carried. The meeting also decided to reduce the required percentage of attendance from 60 to 25 with reference to Article 12 of the new Congress constitution re Censure and Expulsion.

Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne moved the following resolution:

In view of the fact that the inadequate protection of Ceylonese industries and Ceylonese labour has proved gravely detrimental to the true interests of the country, the Ceylon National Congress is of opinion (1) that goods made in Ceylon should be protected by the imposition of suitable tariffs on imported goods which could be produced locally and by the enhancement of such tariffs progressively with the increase in the supply of indigenous goods; and (2) that the interests of Ceylonese labour should be safeguarded (*a*) by the introduction of suitable labour legislation by way of a Workmen's Compensation Act, a Minimum Wages Act, and a Scheme of Insurance; and (*b*) by the introduction of legislation for the restriction of labour immigration from other countries into this country.

Mr. A. W. H. Abeyesundere seconded. Messrs. S. Nissanka, B. Desabandu, Geo. E. de Silva and G. K. Martin Silva supported it. The resolution was put to the house and carried unanimously.

Mr. G. C. S. Corea moved the following resolution:

With a view to increasing the food production of the country, the Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that a scheme should be adopted by way of a Five Year Plan, (a) for expanding and rendering more efficient the cultivation of paddy in the wet zone; (b) for opening up and bringing under paddy cultivation as large an area of the dry zone as possible that is irrigable and otherwise suitable for such cultivation.

Mr. N. de Alwis seconded. Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa supported. Carried unanimously.

Mr. M. H. Jayatilleke moved the following resolution:

While being prepared to give the present Constitution a fair trial, the Ceylon National Congress is strongly of opinion that early steps be taken to remedy defects in its working and that a revision of the Constitution be made within a period not exceeding three years in order to secure a full measure of responsible government.

Mr. Geo. E. de Silva seconded it. Messrs. G. C. S. Corea, W. F. B. Perera, and the Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake supported the resolution. Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne opposed it. The resolution was put before the meeting and carried, only Mr. Wijeyeratne and another voting against it.

Before the sessions concluded the Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman. Mr. G. C. S Corea, in seconding the vote of thanks, associated with it the name of Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya, the Chairman of the Reception Committee and the others who ad contributed to the success of the sessions.

W. R. D. Bandaranaike,
esident.

A. W. H. Abeyesundere,
Jt. Hony. Secy.

15.1.22

23 : B. Draft Report on the Sessions

A feature of the thirteenth annual sessions of the Congress was the fact that for the first time since the year of its inauguration, proceedings were conducted entirely in Sinhalese. Declaring that it was only reasonable to give the constitution a "fair trial," this year's President Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, appealed to the Tamils and minorities to join "the reorganised National Congress."

Mr. Bandaranaike also claimed that the new Constitution gives the Council great powers to do constructive work, and maintained that the achievements of the Council during the last six months justified that claim. Resolutions were then passed ratifying the new Congress constitution, and pledging the Congress to work for revision of the Order-in-Council within three years.

The annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress began yesterday at 1.30 p.m. at the Ananda College Hall. Among those present on the platform were: Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, the Hon. Mr. D. B. Jayatilaka, the Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake, the Hon. Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara, Messrs. W. A. de Silva, N. de Alwis, G. K. W. Perera, E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, F. A. Obeyesekere, V. S. de S. Wikramanayake, Mrs. A. C. G. Wijeyekoon, Mrs. W. A. de Silva, Mrs. G. E. de Silva, Mrs. R. S. S. Gunewardene, Messrs. G. C. S. Corea, J. L. Kotelawala, A. E. Goonesinha, Dr. S. Muttiah and Messrs. R. S. S. Gunewardene and A. W. H. Abeyesundere (Honorary Secretaries).

Proceedings began with the singing of a specially composed national anthem in Sinhalese by a choir of boys from Gampaha.

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1. A handwritten manuscript in English (C.N.A., 60/89–90). This report appeared in the *CDN* (19 December 1931). The headlines read :—

Congress and the Constitution
Further Modification of Attitude
"Distinct Advance"
This Year's Notable Feature Proceedings in Sinhalese

The first two paragraphs amount to a brief summary of the main points in the Presidential Address and serve as an introductory newspaper item for the fuller report that follows.

H. W. Amarasuriya's Address

Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya, Chairman of the Reception Committee, in welcoming the delegates said that it was very gratifying to see such a large number of delegates who had come from all parts of the Island to participate in the deliberations at great personal inconvenience. Their presence particularly at a time when the stress of trade depression had effected every individual in the Island, was a source of encouragement and a happy augury for the future stability of Congress.

After congratulating them on electing as their President Mr. Bandaranaike, "one of the most energetic Secretaries that Congress ever had and one who by his sincerity of purpose had earned for himself an undisputable reputation as a true champion of the rights of the people and a noble son of Lanka," the speaker proceeded to review some of the outstanding events of the year now coming to a close. He touched on the manner in which the village population had exercised the franchise and the election of a lady at the recent by-election. It would be no matter for surprise, he added, if a few more ladies graced the Council Chamber in the near future. It was their fervent hope that they would march towards the search for freedom and conserve the great traditions that had been handed down to them by the great Vihara Maha Devi and others who adorned the pages of the Mahawansa.

Defects of the Constitution

During the short time the State Council had been in existence, they had realised the imperfections of the new Constitution and its manifold inherent defects. The removal of such unsatisfactory features required earnest consideration and the earlier they applied themselves to the task the better it would be in the best interests of the country.

The Donoughmore scheme would have proved a signal failure unless the goodwill and co-operation demanded by to work it to a successful end was readily forthcoming from both the Officers of State and the members of the

Council. It was true they had pledged themselves to give the scheme a fair trial and it was their earnest hope to extend that co-operation as far as possible and also to evolve a Constitution that shall not fall short of full responsible government.

There were some who believed that responsible government might be realised by destructive criticism and by the wholesale condemnation of the new Constitution. The Congress, on the contrary, advocated a fair trial of the Constitution and the adoption of proper constitutional methods for the realisation of its goal.

The Congress had reached a most momentous stage of its career and if it was to function as a live force in the political outlook of the people as it had done hitherto, a high sense of duty, loyalty and co-operation was expected from every one of its members.

The National Congress had been strongly charged in certain quarters with inconsistency and lack of discipline. He challenged anyone to defy its status as the premier political association of the Island, commanding power and influence and, above all, the confidence of the majority of the people. He particularly desired to make reference to the resolution on the agenda regarding a National Fund. He trusted the Congress would accept the same and also support it in a tangible form. They had long felt the urgent need of the establishment of such a fund for the furtherance and promotion of national causes and institutions. The expanding of ideals and heroic words could not alone help them to achieve national progress but such progress should be built on sure foundations.

The speaker next touched upon the problem of education —" it was the primary duty of the state, " he said, " to afford educational facilities as a matter of right and privilege to every boy and girl. "

The building of their economic independence was of paramount importance. He felt that every right-minded person should discharge his duty by the nation and apply himself to the task of increasing food production. Ceylon

which was primarily an agricultural country, could not ever hope to achieve that end until they become self-sufficient in regarding [sic] to food and clothing.

Problem of Caste

In conclusion he referred to the existence of communal differences and caste prejudices to an alarming degree, and appealed to the delegates, when they went back to their respective towns and villages and whenever they came in contact with their less fortunate brethren, to inculcate the total annihilation of caste prejudices in all national undertakings. They would then have done a great service to the Motherland.

Mr. Amarasuriya then invited the President to take the chair and deliver his address.

S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike's Presidential Address

Mr. Bandaranaike, who was greeted with prolonged applause, spoke in Sinhalese. He said: Ladies and Gentlemen, it has been the custom in previous years for Presidents of the Ceylon National Congress to deliver their addresses in English. On this occasion I propose to deviate from that custom and speak only in Sinhalese, because while a large majority of you may not be able to follow me in English, I think all of you understand Sinhalese.

My first duty is to thank you from the bottom of my heart for the great honour your Executive Committee has done me by electing me President for the coming year. When I think of the great past of the Ceylon National Congress and the great and distinguished men who have occupied its presidential chair, I realise that the responsibility is as great as the honour.

I have referred to the past of the Ceylon National Congress. It may not be out of place for me briefly to review its past and recall it to your memories. It is generally true that good things are not achieved with ease; it is out of human travail and misery and sorrow that they generally

spring. It is in pain that the oyster evolves the pearl, and the delicate beauty of the lotus flower above the water has its roots in the mud. The darkest and most shameful page in Ceylon's modern history is the riots of 1915, and out of the wombs of that time of stress and trouble was born the Ceylon National Congress. In his address on " Our Political Needs " delivered in April, 1937, Sir P. Arunachalam finished with these noble words : " So do we in Ceylon desire that our government shall be a Ceylonese Government, that our rulers shall identify themselves entirely with Ceylonese interests and the striking words of the Mahawansa, be one with the people. "

It was principally in order to achieve this great ideal that the Ceylon National Congress was formed in 1916 [*sic*]. The first session was held on 11th December, 1919, under the Presidentship of Sir P. Arunachalam. The first resolution of that session was moved by the Honourable Mr. P. Ramanathan and dealt with the reform of the Legislative Council. The second resolution asked for a reform of local government institutions. The next resolution, moved by Mr. James Peiris, demanded a comprehensive review of taxation with a view to adjusting its incidence on a more equitable basis. Mr. D. B. Jayatilaka moved the fourth resolution which asked for greater educational facilities, scientific, technical, industrial, agricultural and commercial. The next resolution dealing with the establishment of a Ceylon University was proposed by Mr. P. de S. Kularatne. The sixth, asking that vigorous steps be taken for the increase of the production of food crops, was placed before the Congress by the Honourable K. Balasingham. The last resolution asking for the amelioration of labour conditions was moved by Mr. E. W. Jayewardene, K.C.

A Period of Activity

This will show you how alive to the real needs of the country the Congress has been from the beginning. Even today it will be generally acknowledged that the matters dealt with in these resolutions are those which the welfare and advancement of our country demand.

This early period of Congress was one of great and prolific activity. Numerous well reasoned memoranda were forwarded to the authorities, backed up by deputations to England in 1919, 1920 and 1923. The reward was the Reformed Constitution of 1923.

As in all human movements there now sets in a period of marking-time which ended with the arrival of the Donoughmore Commission in 1927.

Such, briefly, is the history of Congress. Other incidents in that history, such as the policy adopted by Congress in regard to the Donoughmore Constitution, I shall refer to later in dealing with the resolutions which you will be asked to consider at these sessions and in outlining our policy for the future.

A Distinguished Roll

As the past of the Congress has been great, so have the men who have been chiefly called upon to guide its destinies in the office of President been distinguished. The names of Sir P. Arunachalam, Sir James Peiris, Mr. H. J. C. Pereira, Mr. D B. Jayatilaka, and Mr. E. W. Perera to mention only a few, will be written in letters of gold not only in the history of Congress but in the annals of Lanka. The mantle which they wore so gloriously has now fallen on my own humble and inadequate shoulders. I can only promise you to employ to their utmost capacity such energy and ability as I may possess in endeavouring to prove myself not entirely unworthy of it.

The New Party

The first matters you will be called upon to consider today he new constitution of the Congress. We are still working er the constitution which was originally framed for gress in very different circumstances at a time when whole country was smarting under the humiliation of

1915 and was unitedly determined to alter the state of affairs in which such things were possible. It was the time when it might be said "that none were for a party and all were for the State." As time went on, in the nature of things the idea of party grew up in Congress itself. Some left us and formed the Labour Party, others left and formed the Liberal League. After anxious and prolonged consideration the Executive Committee has come to the conclusion that the time has come for the Congress to enforce the closer-knit organisation and stricter discipline of a Party, which it now lacks. The new constitution provides for these. In future the Congress will act as a party, subject to the discipline of a party. The unsatisfactory character of the relations at present between Congress and its affiliated associations is remedied, and provision is made for the continuance of affiliated associations as local Congress Associations in areas where they exist, and for the formation of new associations where there are none at present. The provision is also made for the linking up of these local associations by means of District Congress Committees. In this way every single member of every association will have a direct connection with Congress.

I earnestly hope that the new constitution will have your careful consideration and approval.

Congress and the Constitution

The next matter you will be called upon to consider is one of paramount importance, a revision of the Donoughmore Constitution. I think it will be useful to recount shortly the policy of the Congress hitherto regarding the new constitution. At a special session held on 1st September, 1928 the Donoughmore Report was considered and it was decided to accept the recommendations subject to certain modifications, the most important of which referred to the Governor's powers, the Public Services, and the suggested Salaries Commission.

Then[1] came Lord Passfield's despatch which was considered at the session held on 20th December, 1929. The following resolution was unanimously passed :

> In as much as the continuance of the present Constitution is detrimental to the best interests of the country, the Ceylon National Congress strongly recommends the acceptance of the proposed scheme of constitutional reforms, as modified by the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The next stage was the arrival of the Order-in-Council embodying the new Constitution. This was considered at an Executive Committee meeting held on 17.7.31. The Minutes record that the Committee "after discussion decided that there had been no radical departure in the Order-in-Council from the Passfield Despatch. On that ground the Committee declined to take any action in the matter."

A Fair Trial

The attitude of Congress generally and of Congress candidates at the last election may, I think, be summarised as follows · The new Constitution has defects, but because it is a distinct advance on the old Constitution and gives us power to do a great deal of constructive work for the benefit of the people we are prepared to accept it and give it a fair trial. I do not think that can be considered to be an unreasonable attitude The new Constitution began to function at a period of almost unparalled [sic] national depression and we have hitherto been devoting our attention to problems that were not of our making.

State Council's Work

The Council is only now beginning to deal with constructive work. The important question of relief to debtors has been taken in hand, and the Select Committe appointed

1. Portions of the section that follows are similar, word for word, to S W.R.D. Bandaranaike's Memorandum on Amendments to the Donoughmore Constitution which he presented in 1932. See *infra*, item 76.

to consider the subject will shortly make its report. Is this a small achievement for the new Council within six months of its coming into existence ? Within a few days of the Council deciding to grant relief to the unemployed, over 2,000 men were given employment at the Kolonnawa Bund. Is this altogether a trivial feat ? The Committee of Local Administration is now engaged in remodelling Local Government Institutions ; we are at the moment considering necessary amendments to the Village Committees' Ordinance. I have now with me a draft Workmen's Compensation Ordinance sent to me for consideration by the Labour Committee. The Agricultural Committee has many schemes in hand for the advancement of Agriculture and the betterment of the conditions of the peasantry.

Appeal for Time

These schemes cannot fructify in a day or a month or even a year. Let us remember that the history of nations is not counted in decades or even centuries but in thousands of years. It is surely not a statesmanlike or wise action to display a childish petulance or to become hysterical over the passage of a few months, one way or another. We accepted this Constitution knowing its defects in order to give it a fair trial and make full use of it to do constructive work for the benefit of our country, for the benefit of our poor labourers in our towns, and for the benefit of the vast multitude of our peasantry in the villages. I am convinced that a great deal of such work can and is being done ; and the trial we give the constitution must be a fair one. In giving it that fair trial two parties are concerned ; we the Members of the Council on the one hand, and the officials on the other. If at any time an Officer of State or the Governor or the Secretary of State in any matter of real importance acts unreasonably against the wishes of the Council, then they will be not giving the Constitution a fair trial, and we will be perfectly justified in going out of the Council, and we will do so. But I do not see that, having accepted the new Constitution, we could reasonably demand an immediate

revision of it. The resolution, therefore, that will be placed before you is I think a fair and reasonable one and I trust that it will have your earnest consideration.

The Need for Action

The age of memoranda and deputations is past; what we now require is organisation and action. I have no patience with politicians who make violent speeches that mean nothing, who talk big of wrecking the Constitution, and try to delude the country into a false attitude, without making any effort to create the machinery or organisation in the country which alone could make their threats effective.[1] It is my intention in the coming year with your help and through the instrumentality of the Congress to create a close-knit and wide-spread organisation through the length and breadth of our country in order that, when the clash really comes (I sincerely hope the occasion will never arise), we shall be ready to undergo the suffering and sacrifice which the struggle will inevitably involve, if it is to be pursued to success.

In the meanwhile the 3rd, 4th and 5th resolutions that will be placed before you outline a program of national and economic advancement for the coming year by asking for the protection of Ceylonese industries and Ceylonese workers from unfair foreign competition. And by outlining steps that should be taken in order to provide our country with its own food and clothing.

The last resolution deals with the creation of a national und, for without this no national work can be performed ffectively. I hope that all of you will not only approve of e resolution but give it your support in a more substantial anner.

I am glad that the franchise to women, which the Congress s always looked upon with sympathy, has been granted. e result has been a general awakening amongst women

[1] See letter from E. W. Perera printed as an Appendix to the sessions, infra 027–28.

throughout the country. I trust that in the re-organisation of Congress, women will play an important part and take their due share in our deliberations.

It also gives me great pleasure to see that the young men of Ceylon are beginning to take a real interest in matters pertaining to the welfare of their land. I hope that the Congress will in coming years offer them ample opportunity to employ their energy and satisfy their ambition in doing public service.

Invitation To Jaffna

I appeal to our brethren in the North and to the other minorities to join us in working under the banner of the reorganised National Congress for the attainment of that goal which is common to us all, the welfare and advancement of our dear Motherland.

There is one other matter to which I must refer and that is the passing of the Second Reading of the Income Tax Ordinance. The Congress has been fighting for the introduction of income tax from its very inception but its efforts had been always thwarted first by the bureaucracy and then by the unholy combination of unscrupulous capitalists, foreign as well as Ceylonese. At last a Council elected on manhood suffrage, in the face of every kind of pressure and interpresentation, has proved themselves [sic] worthy of the trust reposed in them [sic] by the country. It is significant that out of 46 elected members only (10) ten voted against the income tax. I thank our Congress members who stood loyally by the decision of Congress in regard to income tax, and I also take this opportunity of expressing my gratitude on behalf of Congress to those other members who in fearlessly supporting the income tax refuse to prostitute their consciences or betray the true interest of the vast majority of their constituents.

Moulding the State

The task that faces me and that faces you in the coming year is as great as it is responsible. Many great and exacting qualities are required in those who would mould the

destinies of a people. Vision to conceive in its entirety the whole magnificent edifice, the least and most obscure of its corridors as well as its most lofty and dazzling domes; the energy to work unflaggingly for the achievement of that conception; the patience that refuses to be irritated into an unwise haste; the courage and endurance that will not easily be disheartened by adversity; and finally a true love of one's country which is as lasting as it is unobtrusive. The Ceylon National Congress has played no mean part in laying the foundations of that fair edifice in the past. It is my hope that it will play as important a part in finishing the mighty structure beauteous and enduring for all time.

Spinning and Weaving

The Honorary Secretary then read two telegrams received from Col. T. G. Jayewardene and the Ceylon Labour Union, after which the Chairman, with the permission of the house, advanced item No. 4 on the Agenda before discussing the new rules of the constitution of the Congress which was put off for (the next day).

Mr. J. Jayawardene of Wellampitiya moved the following resolution:

> The Ceylon National Congress resolves to accept and give effect to the report of the Committee appointed to consider the propagation of spinning and weaving in Ceylon.

In doing so he said that at last year's sessions of Congress held at Kandy a resolution to the same effect was passed by Congress and it was resolved that spinning and weaving should be spread through the length and breadth of Ceylon. During the year that had lapsed since, the work done was the appointment of a committee to enquire into the question of propaganda and submit their report.

The report which he presented for acceptance was as follows:

> The sub-committee feels that if this work is in any way to prove successful it is a necessary preliminary

that committee members of Congress should themselves, as a beginning, set an example. The sub-committee realized the practical difficulties in the way of a complete boycott of foreign cloth even by a few individuals, but recommends that the following steps be taken by the Congress Committee as a start which cannot be considered to cause undue or unreasonable inconvenience.

Recommendations

(*a*) Members of the Committee should obtain Charkas, learn spinning and endeavour to spin everyday however short a time.

(*b*) Khadi should be worn, at least on occasions of national work, by Congressmen with the object of eventually eliminating the use of foreign cloth entirely.

(*c*) Steps should be taken without delay to introduce the use of the Takli into our schools, particularly the elementary schools. Spinning on the Takli is easily learnt, the Takli itself costs next to nothing and spinning in the class room for a short time a day may well form part of the curriculum like drill, physical exercises, etc.

By-Occupation For Cotton Growers

Those engaged in cotton growing at present, e.g. at Ambalantota, should be taught ginning, carding and spinning. This can be done by arranging meetings of cotton growers in the areas concerned which Congress members can attend and address. Congress should take steps to have scholars trained with a view to starting centres in various parts of the country. Such a course of training will not take more than three or four months and will cost about Rs. 15 each per month. Congress itself might give a few such scholarships and persuade affiliated associations and individuals in different areas to contribute.

Criticism of Government

Mr. Jayawardene next dwelt on the present form of government and gave his own opinion of the reformed Council as constituted under the Donoughmore Commission report. He was firmly of opinion that they could never obtain self-government except through the medium of Charka. Every man and woman who followed the advice of Mahatma Gandhi, he said, were potential powers for obtaining their goal through suffering and sacrifice. His own experience of the present government, which was a bitter one, was in connection with the appeal made by 16,000 persons of Ambatalanpahala for relief from the disastrous effects of the floods intensified by the protection scheme which saved Colombo at the expense of Ambatalanpahala. The Government was deaf to their entreaties, though Hon. Members of the Council had submitted a report supporting the claims made by the stricken people.

Mr. S. A. Rajapakse enquired whether that incident at Ambatalanpahala had anything to do with the motion before the meeting.

The Chairman asked the interrupter to be a little patient and give the mover a chance to continue.

Mr. Jayawardene, continuing, expressed his doubt about getting any benefit from the present government, which could humiliate members of the State Council by not taking notice of their representations on behalf of the people.

He next quoted from statements made in England by Mahatma Gandhi who had promised freedom for India by adopting the Charka. " No nation, " the Mahatma had said, "had never yet obtained lost freedom by mere appeal to reason. Something much more serious was required. I do not suppose India would be an exception."

These words, said Mr. Jayawardene, should be taken to heart and the people of this country should be able to provide their own clothes, and home spun products. He hoped that when they meet next year, members would all appear in Khaddar.

Mr. Dharmasena Alagiyawanna, seconding, said that the mover practised what he preached as he appeared in home-spun clothes made by himself. It is true that weaving schools were established in various parts of the Island, but that did not lead to much improvement in their economic condition. The yarn used was all imported from abroad.

They must strive to grow the cotton in this country, spin it into yarn and weave their own cloth. It is with that object that the motion was brought up. He hoped it would be accepted.

A Question

Mr. S. A. Rajapakse (Kadugannawa) wished to know whether information could be given as to the ways and means to be adopted to introduce spinning and weaving in his district. For instance, should they form a society for the purpose ? What would be the capital needed ? What part of the country would be suitable for cotton growing ? How long would it take to be proficient in the use of the Takli ?

The Chairman explained that anyone with average intelligence could be proficient in the use of the Takli in [*sic*] two weeks daily practice. The dry zone was well suited for cotton growing. A Co-operative Society could very well manage the business of introducing spinning and weaving as an industry. He would advise all rural residents to plant cotton seed in their own compounds. He assured them that 12 cotton plants would yield sufficient cotton in one year to provide clothes for a family of five.

The resolution was put to the meeting and carried unanimously.

A National Fund : Defect in Congress Constitution.

Mr. R. S. S. Gunewardene next moved :

> That the Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that steps be taken by the Executive Committee for the creation of a National Fund ;

and in doing [illegible]
had [illegible]
a measure of [illegible]
ble. First, [illegible]
minent [illegible]
and acted in [illegible]
gain [illegible]
machinery [illegible]
otherwise [illegible]
provided [illegible]
tional [illegible]

[illegible]

Secondly, [illegible]
a fund [illegible]
program of [illegible]
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charity of the rich. It was necessary, therefore, if they wanted the poor man, the man with ability and with the will to work in the Congress cause, that sufficient funds should be at the disposal of Congress to meet situations that might arise in the future independently and unhampered by considerations of expense. He sincerely hoped that members of Congress and all those who had the interests of Congress at heart would contribute liberally to the proposed National Fund.

Resolution Adopted

Mr. W. Sathasivam, seconding the resolution, which he said had been most ably proposed by Mr. Gunewardene, repeated that much of the work of Congress in the past years had suffered greatly from lack of funds, and as one who had been a Secretary of the Congress, he said he could testify to the difficulties which the Secretaries had to encounter on that account. When money was found necessary, especially in the outstations, they had very readily received such help.

The resolution was then put to the House and carried unanimously.

Adjournment

The Chairman in winding up the proceedings for the day extended an invitation to all present to partake of refreshment which he said had been kindly provided by the Chairman of the Reception Committee, Mr. Amarasuriya. Mr. Bandaranaike also appealed to those present, and others who were able to do so, to attend the Dramatic Entertainment which was to be given that night, mainly in aid of the newly formed National Fund, and thus help forward the great National cause which they all had at heart.

The Congress then adjourned, it being decided that the essions be started at 8 30 a. m., to enable the proceedings eing finished in time for the outstation delegates to return o their respective stations.

Second Day's Proceedings[1]

"No amount of loud talking can effect a change in the Constitution," *declared Mr. D. S. Senanayake at Saturday's* session of the National Congress, when a resolution in the following terms was discussed:—

> While being prepared to give the present Constitution a *fair trial, the Ceylon National Congress is strongly of* opinion that early steps be taken to remedy defects in its working and that a revision of the Constitution be made within a period not exceeding three years in order to secure a full measure of responsible government.

After an unsuccessful appeal for the postponement of the discussion by a dissentient, the motion was adopted, two of those present voting against.

Meaning of Resolution

Mr. M. H. Jayatilleke, moving the resolution, said that what that resolution stated was that the defects in the existing Constitution should be amended without delay as they came across them in the actual working of the Constitution. It also stated that the existing Constitution should be altered within a period of three years. The Donoughmore Constitution was accepted by the Ceylon National Congress as a temporary measure although it realised that it was defective. There are certain features of responsible government such as the full control of the purse, the control of the permanent executive by the removable executive, etc.; that were not included in the Donoughmore scheme.

1. This section of the draft report was printed in the *ODN*, with the headlines supplied in the draft:
Minister Satisfied
Constitution Good Enough
Congress View
Putting off the Evil Day

While remedying the constitutional defects as they arose they should also consider within the next three years whether they should have the Cabinet System of Government or any other form of government.

Defects of Committee System

They had accepted the Committee System of Government and one of its main defects was with regard to the election of Ministers. His idea was that the present system was derogatory to their interests. He thought that a Minister should be elected by the whole house so that he might be responsible to the whole house, and not elected by the respective Committees. Another defect of the Committee system was in the preparation of the budget. One Committee did not know what the other was asking for. He thought that a resolution of that nature should have been better discussed in a larger house where Ministers and more members of the State Council were present so that they might have had the benefit of their views also before coming to a decision on that matter.

No Soldiers and Swords

Mr. Geo. E. de Silva, in seconding the resolution, said that they should think of the revision of the Constitution as a practical problem. Ceylon had no soldiers and no swords to fight with England and demand the revision of the Constitution immediately in the manner that some wanted, but they could urge upon the British Government their claims with reason and with a fair chance of getting what they wanted. When the building was defective and leaking they repaired the defective parts and made it comfortable to live in. They did not pull down the whole building. In a similar way, was it not more prudent for them to remove the defects of the existing Constitution so that they might gradually evolve a better Constitution. If on the other hand, after only six months of work under the Constitution, they said that they wanted immediately and entirely a new Constitution, was it likely that England would grant what they wanted ? Mr. Lloyd George stated it in public the other day, and he knew it even before that,

that there was no Constitution in the world which was perfect and it was for the individuals to remove every obstacle that they come across. That was certainly a more prudent course than asking for the immediate introduction of another Constitution.

A Dissent

Mr. E. A P. Wijeyeratne, in opposing the resolution, said that he did so with a certain amount of regret and hesitation because he did not want to oppose the views of their President on the matter and also because he did not want to go counter to Mr. George E. de Silva. As an insignificant member of the State Council he was totally opposed to that resolution. When Congress accepted the Donoughmore scheme it distinctly stated that it would give it a trial but if, in the working of it, they found it a failure that they could not carry it on. There were two defects in the existing Constitution. The first defect was that they accepted it knowing its defects. They had accepted it knowing very well that the power of the purse was not with them, and that the Public Service was removed from the control of the Ministers and also that there were three Officers of State who, as Mr. E. W. Perera had said, were like plainclothes policemen.

Not Possible to Work

In considering that resolution they should first consider whether the present Constitution was workable or not. He thought that the time had come when they had found out that it was not possible to work that Constitution. He would give them only one or two instances. If the State Council decided on a certain sum of money as personal emoluments to the members in the Public Service and if in the course of the year there was a balance remaining, the Financial Secretary stated that it was open to the Governor to give that money to someone else or to employ another. Mr. D. B. Jayatilaka had, however, stated on behalf of the Board of Ministers that they did not share that view. The Committee on Education had decided that the salary of the

Principal of the Royal College should be reduced but the Public Services Commission had recommended against that decision. Under the existing Constitution the Council had some power but that was to be gradually taken away from them. He did not know what would be left. Last year without the approval of the State Council Rs. 78,000 had been spent by the Department of Electrical Undertakings. The Council had refused to sanction the expenditure when it was brought up for its approval after the money had been spent, but the Governor had certified it. If a resolution like that was adopted by the Congress it would tie hand and foot the Congress Members in Council. Next month Mr. E. W. Perera was bringing up a number of resolutions with regard to the Constitution and among them there were several which had been approved by the Congress in open sessions year after year. He wished to know from the President what would be the position of Congress members in the present Council with regard to those resolutions of Mr. Perera if the present motion was adopted ? Were they asked to oppose them ?

President's View

Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike (the President) said that in his series of resolutions Mr. E. W. Perera was asking for a complete and immediate change of the Constitution, and if they were to accept all his resolutions what would be their position? It would be open to the Secretary of State to tell them that they were asking now not for an alteration of the details of the existing Constitution but for an entirely new Constitution. Would the Secretary of State grant such a demand ? There were certainly some resolutions of Mr. Perera which were acceptable to them but the main idea of all his resolutions was an immediate change in the whole Constitution. Mr. Perera had opposed the existing Constitution from the very start, and therefore, it was open to him to bring forward such resolutions but would it be reasonable for the Congress, after giving the Constitution a trial of six months only, ask that the whole Constitution be altered ?

Only 40 Per Cent [*sic*]

Mr. Wijeyeratne, resuming his speech, said that he was ot in agreement with the resolutions of Mr. E. W. Perera ›garding the Committee system but his other resolutions 'ere for the purpose of obtaining a more responsible form ! government. If the Congress had asked for responsible overnment year after year how could they, as men of ›ason, now oppose their very creed although it was being ropounded by one who might not be with them. He ppealed to them—there were only 40 of them at that ioment—not to put the members into a predicament by lopting that resolution. If they wanted a reform of the onstitution they should offer their help in every possible 'ay to those who were trying to achieve it. He appealed to iem to adopt the wiser course of discussing the resolutions f Mr. Perera at a special sessions as they were of great nportance.

Prepared To Chuck Up Seats

The President said Mr. E. W. Perera asked for the imme- iate alteration of the Constitution and for immediate waraj. If the Secretary of State refused that demand 'hat were they going to do ? Should they not refuse to 'ork the present Constitution and go back to the country nd educate the people ? He had asked Mr. E. W. Perera 'hether in the event of the Secretary of State refusing that emand, he was prepared to go out of the State Council nd Mr. Perera had replied that he was not going to take iat course. He knew that to other members of Council Ir. Perera had given the same reply.[1] What was the use of hat resolution if the Secretary of State was going to ›eat it in that way and they were not going to take any irther action as men who could not only talk but also act 'hen the occasion arose ? In the resolution now before iem they asked for a revision of the Constitution within hree years and if that was not done they were prepared › "chuck up" their Council seats and go to the country.

1 See E W. Perera's reply, pp 1027-28 below

With regard to the question of Mr. Wijeyeratne, whether they were going to oppose all Mr. E. W. Perera's resolutions, he would say that there was no need to oppose all of them. They might amend some of them.

The Foundation

Mr. G. C. S. Corea advised his audience to consider both sides of the question carefully before coming to a decision. He would remind them that the basic foundation of the Constitution as recommended by the Donoughmore Commission was the Committee system. If that were removed the whole super-structure would collapse. The new Constitution was accepted on that basis and on condition that they would try to work it for a limited period. They had tried it and found certain defects which they were trying to remove as soon as possible. That was the object of the resolution. They were not asking for the removal of the Committee system, for that would be to destroy the whole structure. Within three years any defects discovered were to be remedied and that could be done by giving the constitution a fair trial. He recommended the acceptance of the motion.

Mr. A. V. Dias supported Mr. Corea and quoted a stanza from Mihiripenne's writings to the effect that if they found a way and were given eyes to see, they should not go astray like one who was blind.

Mr. Senanayake's Remarks

The Hon. Mr. Senanayake said that he regretted he was not present at the time the motion was added to the agenda. He was glad to have been present when Mr. Wijeyeratne spoke in opposition to the motion. The object of accepting the Constitution as recommended by the Donoughmore Commission was to work it and go a step on the road to responsible self-government. Once they took a road and had gone some distance they must not be deterred by howls and shouts from other directions and be led away from the path they had taken. They were striving to be equal to the other

members of the Commonwealth of Nations that was the British Empire, and had no idea of separation from Great Britain.

It was about five months since the State Council began to function and whatever discouragement was before them they had strived to do their best, and they had certainly found that the Committee system of Government did work. They had certain powers and it was well known that headmen and other Government officers, both European and Ceylonese, had certain misgivings about their own position under the new Constitution. They had now found that they were adequately protected. As regards the statement about the Public Services Commission not approving the reduction of the salary of the Principal of the Royal College he did not know anything about it and could not say whether the information was right or wrong. It would be natural for a European to resent a reduction in the salary of another European just as much as a Ceylonese would, if the case was that of a Ceylonese. But he would remind them that they had the right to have the final "say" in the matter.

Government Circular

They had no power, however, in selecting a person for a post and he believed that it was the same with the English Parliament.

With regard to the circular sent out by Government in regard to dismissal of officers he said that it was the most unwise and foolish thing ever done since the British occupation. He did not know why it should be thought that the Board of Ministers wished to do anything they had not the power to do.

The Ministers had the power to lay down the policy to be carried out, the execution of which was in the hands of His Excellency the Governor.

No amount of loud talking could effect a change in the Constitution. Difficulties and obstacles had to be overcome, whether coming from the Governor or from the Chief Secretary or anybody else. That was what they had been trying

to do since they had accepted the scheme and hoped to make it work. Their one object was to obtain freedom for the people and benefit for the country.

Tribute to Officials

He could say that he received the co-operation of the various Heads of Departments that came within the purview of his Ministry. He proposed to go on a long circuit during the holidays in order to visit tanks, forests, etc., and on his enquiring whether some of the officers would oblige him by meeting him at certain stations he was gratified to receive prompt replies of acquiesence to his wishes. Most of the officers were Christians who enjoyed Christians, while he was a Buddhist. That showed the fine spirit displayed by the officers of his seven departments.

There was no use of talking for talking's sake. They must act and try to do their best to work the scheme which they had accepted. He felt sure that in time they would have so overcome the difficulties and remedied the defects, as these were discovered, that they would be soon on the road to full responsible government.

The resolution was put to the meeting and carried, Mr. Wijeyeratne and another member dissenting.

Besides the consideration of its new Constitution[1], the National Congress on Saturday defined in a series of resolutions what might be summarised as its economic program.

The morning session was devoted entirely to the consideration of the new Congress constitution, which provides for the promotion of a Congress Party in the State Council, besides the establishment of District Congress Committees.

1. This section of the report onthe second day's proceedings appeared separately in the *CDN* of 21 December, 1931 under the captions :

Economic Programs of Congress
5 Year Plan for Paddy
Saturday's Proceedings

Mr. S. W. R. Dias Bandaranaike (President) occupied the chair. The Executive Committee for the ensuing year was formally elected, and the meeting then proceeded to consider the new constitution of the Congress.

Age Limit Extended

An amendment to alter the age entitlng a person to membership in the Congress to 18 years instead of 21 was carried.

In connection with the rule relating to the transaction of business, framed by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee, an amendment to the effect that all proceedings be conducted in Sinhalese, except on occasions when circumstances do not permit it, was withdrawn on it being pointed out that a hard and fast rule as proposed would make the Congress appear to be a purely Sinhalese organisation

Mr. Jayawardene withdrew his amendment

The annual contribution by each District Committee to the All-Ceylon Congress Committee was fixed at the rate of 10 cents per head.

Party Discipline

The following article of the constitution was next taken up:

> Any Congress member or Congress Councillor who has acted contrary to the decisions of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee or of the Congress Party may be dealt with by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee provided not less than 60 per cent of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee are present and two-thirds of the number present shall support such action. Not less than one week's notice of such meeting shall be given to the member concerned who shall be given an opportunity of explaining his action complained of.

After considerable discussion it was decided to reduce the required percentage of attendance from 60 to 25.

Protection of Labour and Industries

The afternoon session commenced shortly after 1 o' clock. Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne moved the following resolution :

> In view of the fact that inadequate protection of Ceylonese Industries and Ceylonese Labour has proved gravely detrimental to the true interests of the country, the Ceylon National Congress is of opinion (1) That goods made in Ceylon should be protected by the imposition of suitable tariffs on imported goods which could be produced locally, and by the enhancement of such tariffs progressively with the increase in the supply of indigenous goods ; and (2) That the interests of Ceylonese Labour should be safeguarded (*a*) by the introduction of suitable labour legislation by way of a Workmen's Compensation Act, a Minimum Wages Act, and a Scheme of Insurance and (*b*) by introduction of legislation for the restriction of labour-immigration from other countries into Ceylon and by the establishment of a Board of Immigration with statutory powers to control the influx of immigrants into this country.

He said much was not necessary to be said for the acception [*sic*] of the resolution. Even if Ceylon was successful in producing articles which are usually imported it would not be able to compete successfully with the imported article owing to the lack of a protective tariff. It was true that they would think of raising a tariff wall. However he feared the inroads of foreign articles which were in most cases sold at lower rates than the local article. He mentioned the fate that befell the local match manufactury. When the local company was formed and produced matchboxes cheaper than the imported variety, the Three Star Match Company immediately under-cut the price and flooded the market till it was found impossible to produce the local matches at the lower rate and the industry was threatened with extinction. Eventually 55 per cent of the shares of the local Company was sold to the foreign Company and the manufacture was started again on condition

that the output should be in the proportion of two of the foreign match cases to one of the local manufacture. Had there been a protective tariff the foreign competition could have been easily scotched. He was glad to note that in Nawalapitiya a good variety of soap was manufactured and found a ready market in Ceylon. The gaols and Government offices were using that soap now. But one could never say when a cheaper article might enter from a foreign source and kill the local industry. It was therefore all the more reason why a tariff wall should be raised for the protection of local industry.

As regards the introduction of legislation for safeguarding labour interests he said that steps were being contemplated and legislative measures would shortly be introduced in the State Council. Immigrant Labour was causing much unemployment and distress among local labourers and unless timely measures were taken there would not be a place open for the Sinhalese man for all the available jobs would be taken by the immigrant whose numbers were already a menace to the country.

A British Convert

Mr. A. W. H. Abeyesundere, seconding, said that Mr. Runcinian, the President of the Board of Trade, who was once a strong opponent of a tariff wall, was now a confirmed protectionist as he realised that even England was fast becoming the dumping ground of continental and foreign goods of the cheap variety. As an instance of the wrong policy adopted by government officers in the matter of finding revenue-earning sources he mentioned the case of the heavy import duty placed on the wood imported to Ceylon for the manufacture of matches. Such industries as canning and preserving fruits, manufacture of jams and jellies could be done here with profit and a high tariff placed on the imported variety would protect and promote the local manufacture. The Rural Reconstruction Society had undertaken this work and was making a trade of it while giving employment to the unemployed. These could be encouraged by the imposition of suitable tariffs on imported goods which could be produced locally.

Japan's Example

Mr. S. Nissanka, in supporting the resolution, said that in 1872 Japan was in the same state as Ceylon was at present. It was just at that period that the national renaissance of Japan began and with the view of encouraging their own industries they adopted a system of preferential tariffs. Besides, the manufacture of cloth in the Island could be very well advanced and employment given to a large number of the unemployed. There was also the Ceylon tile industry which could compete against the best imported brands, but no encouragement was given to it with the result that the local industry languished for want of support. He hoped that they would not only pass that resolution but see that the question was raised in the Legislature and the necessary legislation brought into being.

Tea Chest Industry

Mr. Baladeva Desabandu mentioned the decline of the Horetuduwa tea chest industry as a result of the competition from abroad and said that while the other countries were forging ahead with preferential tariffs and in some cases prohibition of the import of certain goods, Ceylon had become the dumping ground of all foreign goods.

Mr. Geo. E. de Silva said that even before he had become a member of the State Council he had investigated into [*sic*] that problem of local tea chest industry. It had been stated by European merchants and by the Chamber of Commerce that the tea chests imported from Japan were superior and more suited for the transport of tea than the local wood. Under those circumstances he had asked the Minister of Agriculture to investigate into the suitability of Ceylon woods with the idea of finding some local wood which would be suited for the purpose of making tea chests. He was glad to inform them that the experiments carried out with a Rapok tree at Peradeniya had proved very successful and there was every hope and possibility of that wood being utilised for the purpose of making tea chests which would be able to hold their own against the imported

wood. He also wished to mention to them that the wood of the Rapok tree had also been found suitable for the purpose of manufacturing match-sticks.

In conclusion he appealed to them to give a breathing opportunity to their representatives in the State Council. They had been there only from July last and within that brief period they had done some good work and they intended to do a good deal of profitable work for the country as soon as they got the chance and the agenda was now filled with government motions which had to be given preference over their motions.

Mr. G. K. Martin Silva wished to know whether it was possible in four months for the State Council to clear the Augean Stables. With regard to the resolution they were discussing he wished to say that there would not be so much unemployment in the Island but not [sic] for the advent of cheap foreign labour. That led him to a statement made by Ratwatte Adigar in the State Council that there were only eight cases of starvation in Kandy deserving relief. That was a marvellous statement to make by one who claimed to be interested in Kandy and who said that he knew Kandy very well. How well the people of Kandy knew him was seen from the fact that he had to go to Balangoda in search of a Council seat.

The resolution was then put to the house and was carried.

Five-Year Plan

Mr. G. C. S. Corea next moved the following resolution:

With a view to increasing the food production of the country the Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that a scheme should be adopted by way of a Five-Year Plan—

(*a*) For expanding and rendering more efficient the cultivation of paddy in the wet zone;

(*b*) For opening up and bringing under paddy cultivation as large an area of the dry zone as possible that is irrigable and otherwise suitable for such cultivation.

Agriculture was the premier industry of Ceylon in ancient times, he said, and especially paddy cultivation. They had to help themselves and the object of the resolution was to achieve that end within a certain limited time. They had an Agricultural Department it is true and all that was done was the appointment of two to three Agricultural Instructors who rushed about the rural districts trying to teach the villager how to grow paddy. He knew of one or two who were in Chilaw District for the last six years and the only bit of constructive work they had done was cultivating two *liyadu* of paddy land and as for any new *aswenna* there was nothing to speak of. The Department had swell offices in Kandy and much correspondence passed through it but beyond that he did not think there was much done for the benefit of the village cultivator and [for] paddy growing. The cry was raised both by government officers and also leading men in the country asking all and sundry to go back to the land. Where was the land to go to? Where was the money coming from to cultivate the land? Where was the cattle for tilling to be obtained? Without answering those questions it was idle to raise the parrot cry "Go back to the land."

In the first place there were old tanks which irrigated thousands of arable lands which must be restored, next provision must be made for cattle as well as grazing grounds for them. He quoted the case of the Tinipitawewa in Madampe District the bund of which was breached 21 years ago and yet remained unattended. That tank had a capacity of irrigating a thousand acres of paddy land. When the General Manager of Railways wanted a saloon to go on inspection, without any hesitation a sum of Rs. 75,000 was voted. But where the villager required assistance to grow

paddy he was not given the least attention. As the President had already given notice of a motion in the State Council on the subject he would not enter into too much detail. He submitted the resolution for their acceptance.

Mr. N. de Alwis, seconding the resolution, referred to the closing of the sluices of a tank known as Dedduwawewa which irrigated 2,000 acres of paddy land in the Bentota District. The water was obtained by an anicut across the Bentota river and provided with sluices. In 1893 the sluices were permanently closed and those paddy land-owners who depended on the water obtained from this source were put to great inconvenience. When the matter was brought to the notice of the Government Agent (Mr. Russell)—a sympathetic officer—the reply was that the fields were lower than sea level and if the sluices were opened sea water would enter the fields and destroy their productiveness. It was stated that Surveyors and Engineers had taken levels and found that the land was below sea-level.

The speaker challenged the statement and proved that the engineers were wrong by a personal visit to the spot in the company of the Government Agent during the dry season.

He had high hopes that once again Ceylon would be able to produce all the rice needed for local consumption. If they produced their own rice they could afford to ignore the threat held out by the Indians who were opposed to Income Tax that rice supply would be stopped.[1]

Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa, speaking next, said that Ceylon already produced one-third of the demand and only two-thirds came from abroad and of that, half was from India and the other half from Burma. So that the quantity India actually exported to Ceylon was that quantity which India still [produ]ced to feed the six lakhs of estate labourers. If they made a determined effort to grow more paddy they need not [w]ait for five years or open up new land and carry in

1. This sentence has been printed as it appears in the text

antimalaria campaigns and other costly ventures. With proper selection of seed paddy and improved methods of cultivation on the existing paddy lands, they would be able to double the yield. He warned them against eating the polished rice which was imported and recommended country rice which preserved intact the vitamins. Vegetables and fruit should enter more into their dietary and the amount of rice taken should be considerably reduced as over-indulgence in rice, he believed, brought on diabetes. Green gram, *niviti*, mukunuwenna, were excellent vegetables which supplied the necessary vitamins.

Referring to the youth movement, which was a copy of the one which started in Germany fifteen years ago he deplored the lack of vision on the part of those who introduced it here. In Germany, he said, it started among town boys and girls who were fed up with urban conditions and went to the country for week-ends and helped the farmers in farm work and did useful work both for the farmers and for themselves. But in Ceylon nobody had yet started tramps to the rural districts.

The motion was put to the meeting and carried unanimously.

After the resolution defining the attitude of the Congress to the defects revealed in the new Constitution had been disposed of, the Chairman thanked the delegates for the attendance [*sic*] and hoped that with their assistance and co-operation the year before them would be productive of benefit to the country.

Votes of Thanks

Mr. Senanayake as the oldest member of the Congress congratulated the new President in whom they had found a worthy leader and patriot who would guide the destinies of the country to the destined goal.

Mr. Corea proposed a vote of thanks to the Chairman of the Reception Committee (Mr. Amarasuriya) for the excellent reception given to the delegates.

Tea was served by Mr. K. D. David and shortly after the Congress sessions closed.

23 : C.

Appendices to Thirteenth Annual Sessions

(1) Letter to the Editor, Ceylon Daily News from E. W. Perera : 20 December 1931

Sir, I regret to find that Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, if he is correctly reported in the Press, has made a gross misrepresentation, I have no doubt unintentionally, which is calculated to mislead the country, of what I stated to him, in his reply to Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne at the Congress sessions on the 19th regarding the motions on constitutional reform (Donoughmore Scheme) of which notice was given by me in July last.

"He would not hesitate to say (Mr. Bandaranaike is reported to have said) that he had asked Mr. E. W. Perera in regard to those motions, whether, if they were passed and the Secretary of State refused to consider them favourably, he was prepared to resign and go to the country and fight the issue. Mr. Perera's reply to him had been that he was not prepared to cause a general election on that issue. What, then, would be the use of committing the Council and the country to adopt such a motion? Was not Congress being more practical in adopting the present resolution?"

This is a serious distortion of what I said. I never dec-lared that I was not "prepared to cause a General Election on the issue." What I did say was "that there was no necessity to force a general election merely because we passed these motions."

Soon after I gave notice of my motion a number of Con-gress members of the State Council, including Mr. Bandara-naike, came up to me, approved of them, and said they wi

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…e CDN, 21 December 1931, which contains another letter on
…ss from "A Student of Politics."

support the motions; some of them demurred to the last motion dealing with the Committee system. Some time afterwards some of these Congress members said that Mr. Bandaranaike seems to think that we should not stultify ourselves by passing these resolutions; if we did so and the Secretary of State turned them down the only alternative left would be resignation from Council and non-co-operation. I pointed out that non-co-operation was the last and not the first step in constitutional agitation and if a Council elected on a 100 per cent electorate to whom for the first time the Donoughmore scheme was submitted laid our unanswerable case before the Secretary of State who would not anticipate his decision and say he would give judgement against us. We shall have to consider what steps we should take after reading his reasoned reply; that public opinion both here and in England properly marshalled to support our case ought to make us succeed; the country was with us; we have made sufficient trial of the Donoughmore scheme to know its most dangerous defects; and that there was no necessity to force a general election merely because we passed these motions. I subsequently put these points to Mr. Bandaranaike in a conversation I had with him trying to allay his apprehensions, but his reply was "I will consider them; we shall see."

I felt that his enthusiasm for the reform motions had waned and that the new President of the Congress will seek to wean his followers from supporting the motions. I later told some of my other Congress friends that if the motions failed, the only alternative would be to force a general election that the country might have the straight issue of the Donoughmore scheme which Mr. Bandaranaike apparently thinks was decided in favour of the scheme at the last election. This is not the place nor the occasion for dealing with Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike's Congress address whether in the bowdlerized English translation or in the ample and elegant or vulgar version.—Yours etc.,

Edward W. Perera

Kotte, Dec. 20.

(2) Letter to the Editor, Ceylon Daily News from "A Student of Politics": 20 December 1931

Sir, The National Congress (Ceylon) has met again in annual session and laid claim once more to have a policy and to represent the majority of the people of the Island. It is only fair, both by the members of the Congress and the public, to examine whether the claim is justified

If the Congress has a policy, is such policy one the country should adopt ? Whom does the Congress represent ? An analysis of this nature would help to clear the air and to formulate a correct public opinion upon a material issue.

An analysis is also necessary because statements have been made by persons holding responsible offices in the country with the approval, and in the presence of others of the same designation.

The aim of the dead Ceylon National Congress—revered be its memory!—of which Sir Arunachalam was the founder, was full responsible self-government. The Council (then Legislative) was to have full control over the budget and without such strange division as was proposed for India of reserved and transferred subjects (see Congress Handbook edit., by Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike—1st Annual Sessions, 1919).

Passing over certain years, one comes to the special sessions of 1928, summoned to consider the Donoughmore Report.

It was decided to accept the report only if the Governor's powers were restricted, the Executive Committees abolished and the control over public officers retained. The possibility of any diminution in the control over Finance exercised by the Legislative Council was never even imagined. After the Passfield Report came, an Executive Committee of the Congress in April 1929 rejected the Donoughmore

Scheme. The Scheme was sometime later passed by the Legislative Council on the 12th December 1929, and thereafter at another meeting of the Executive Committee it was decided to move the acceptance of the Scheme at the annual session of 1929.

The motion that was moved by Mr. G. C. S. Corea gave place to an amendment moved by the Hon'ble Mr. (then Mr.) Kannangara.

The amendment was to the following effect:

> This Congress re-affirms its demand for full responsible government at the next revision of the Constitution but pending such revision recommends the acceptance for a short period of the proposed Donoughmore Scheme of Constitutional Reforms as modified by the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

It was the amendment that was passed, only one delegate voting against it.

The original motion which was withdrawn is the one referred to by the President in his address at the present sessions, to wit:

> In as much as the continuance of the present Constitution is detrimental to the best interests of the country, the Ceylon National Congress strongly recommends the acceptance of the proposed scheme of constitutional reforms, as modified by the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

It is best to place side by side with the above resolutions, the resolution approved at the present sessions, to wit:

> While being prepared to give the present Constitution a fair trial, the Ceylon National Congress is strongly of opinion that a revision of the Constitution should be made within the period of three years with a view to remedying its defects and altering its provisions in order to secure a full measure of Responsible Government.

Mark you the period ! Three years from December 1931 In 1929, it was a short period. The life of the present State Council expires in July 1935. Three years from December 1931 will be December 1934 when the Congress members, if alive, can have the revision of the Constitution as their election slogan. Till then they need not go back to the country on the constitutional issue.

But to come back. One has only to bear in mind the object of the dead National Congress and resolutions at the special sessions of 1928 and compare them with the original resolution and the amendment of 1929 and the resolution of 1931 to realise the verbal jugglery that is being performed. The amendment was materially different to the original motion.

The original motion made no provision for steps towards revision. But the amendment did. When the question now is immediate revision or trial, it is significant that the Congress at the present sessions forgot the amendment but remembered the motion.

The President in his address makes no reference to the amendment. A correction of his statement or this statement made by me is welcome.

One hardly need labour the point. The Congress, since it betrayed its trust, had no policy. The policy it now envisages is bold for its novelty. Leaving the Constitution well alone, it turns its deft hand to the formation of a Congress party. "In future the Congress will act as a party subject to the discipline of a party." Act where? In the State Council? But the State Council is designed to prevent the formation of party systems. That is the basis of its structure. The four wise men decided that Ceylon was no place for a party system and said further that the party system was obsolete (vide the Donoughmore Report). They, then, in the fertility of their mind, gave birth to a Scheme of Committees, each Committee to be, so to say, the party of each Minister as its

head (vide Report). The State Council except in regard to the budget was to be free of the fluctuations of party fortunes.

One has to make up his mind at some time. Is Ceylon to have a parliamentary system of government based on parties or is Ceylon to have the Committee system based on the absence of parties ?

If the latter, it would be a waste of energy to concentrate on the formation of parties. If the former, why wait till the next election to remove the obvious impediment to a party system. One has not yet forgotten the drawing of lots at the selection of the Committees and the Board of Ministers to realise the impossibility for any party as at present, unless it has an overwhelming majority, to secure seats on the Board or have a majority in the seven Committees. The ex-President of Congress who found one Congressman with him against five non-Congressmen in his Committee will tell the tale. So that to retain the present Constitution and to form an effective party system is like an attempt to make two parallel lines meet.

One searched anxiously in the proceedings at the sessions for one word in regard to fiscal autonomy. Even the defunct Legislative Council unanimously passed a resolution that its financial powers should remain unimpaired. The dead National Congress jealously guarded the power of the purse.

The new National Congress proclaims it as its great feat the passing of the second reading of the Income Tax Bill the end of which the country has yet to chew.

But beyond this feat there is no mention of any policy in regard to finance. There is no mention either of the point on which revision of the Constitution will after the next election be sought. A political association which sees no vision either of constitutional or fiscal power is for all practical purposes dead and needs next only a decent burial.

So long as the present policy of the Congress remains it would be an utter misrepresentation to say that the Congress represents the majority in the country.

The majority of the people in this country take a different view.

But the danger for the moment is the exploitation of the masses by specious premises of relief from unemployment, compensation, and land for cultivation. It was one of the aims of the Donoughmore Commissioners to turn away political thought from the central to local administration: in that they would appear to have succeeded in so far as the Congress is concerned, for Local Administration has been the trump card of the Congress sessions in 1929 and 1930. But while all are agreed that the amelioration of the lot of the labourer and the peasant is an important need, those who claim to lead the political thought of this country should surely have a view higher than securing the werewithal to live. Political and economic emancipation are not independent but interdependent. The working classes and the rural population have claim to right leadership which, if asserted, should be exercised for their emancipation and not for their exploitation to secure political power.—Yours, etc.

A Student of Politics.

Colombo, December 20.

(3) Ceylon Daily News Editorial, 21 December, 1931: "The Congress Skeleton"

The discussion on the Constitution at Saturday's session of the Congress was useful as a revelation of the tragedy that has overcome that once powerful body. It was also valuable for the reason that it provided a complete exposure of the causes that led to that tragedy. From the day the Donoughmore Report was published until the General Election, and even since that date, the merits and defects of the reforms have been the subject of debate in all kinds of

assemblies and under all manner of circumstances. But on no single occasion was there such a display of deliberate self-deception as was practised before the forty odd persons who had the patience to remain to the end of the rather pathetic Congress session. Until the thorny question of the Constitution was reached those who now guide the destinies of the Congress contrived to keep up a show of serious purpose. Decisions were taken to work on party lines and establish a fund for which nobody knows where the money will come from. All this was calculated to impress the country with the sincerity and the will to get things done that would galvanise the new party into action. But no sooner the new and the second hand saviours of the nation came face to face with the big political issue they began to dance sideways, and talk about reason and fairness and what other people would or would not do in case the Secretary of State refuses to revise the Constitution.

Could any more damning evidence of the lack of a policy be asked for or given ? The public was being invited to witness and bless the birth of a new party. Since the most important thing about a party is its policy the country was entitled to expect enlightenment on this score. But the only policy that was disclosed during the welter of half-hearted debate on Saturday afternoon was a determination to keep the real motives that inspire the Congress leaders of today a firm secret. These men were among the foremost to recognise the retrograde features of the Constitution even before it was tried and found wanting, and the attempt now to hedge with excuses that it is a great advance and that a demand for immediate revision would not be "fair" or "reasonable" will not convince the country that the new party is any good at all. The country is too well aware that the Constitution has serious drawbacks that cancel out the advantages carried by its liberal features, and any party worth the name must submit itself to the test imposed by its attitude on the constitutional issue. Faced with the question the Congress spokesmen did not give a straight answer. Instead they sought refuge in what a member of another party was alleged—without any warrant for the assumption,

as Mr. E. W. Perera indicates in a letter published elsewhere today—to have said he would do in certain circumstances and conveniently argued therefrom that in letting the Constitution remain as it is they are playing the part of political pundits.

The Congress Party thus stands unmasked at the very beginning of its career as the last refuge of the opportunists. The whole case for Congress participation in the new Constitution was that the object of such participation was reform from within. Some of the most prominent members of the re-organised Congress only got into the State Council at all because of the raucous asseveration that the very first thing they would do when they got there would be to mend the Constitution. Having got there they fall back on worn-out shibboleths of sportsmanship and fairplay to camouflage one of the meanest stratagems it is possible to imagine. It is only necessary to contrast the attitude of what is left of the Congress today with the firm stand of the Ceylon National Congress in 1920 to realise to what depths small men can drag down great institutions and national causes. Had Sir James Peiris, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam and those who stood by them in those years vacillated and played for self, Ceylon would today have probably been in the political position of the Fiji Islands or some such backward dependency. The Congress grew in strength and was able to impose its terms twelve years ago because it was guided by men who did not sell the truth to serve the hour. Because it dare not tell the truth about its own motives the Congress Party indulges in transparent subterfuges of policy. The letter we publish from a correspondent who signs himself "A Student of Politics" throws a revealing light on the disingenuous tactics of the Congress. It shows how the Congress has gone back on its principles and forfeited the confidence of the thinking classes. The emptiness of the hall in which the Congress sessions drew to an ignominious close on Saturday afternoon is the expression of the contempt with which self-respecting people regard a political opportunism in all its manifestations.

7—K 19798 (75/03)

(4) Newspaper Report on a Meeting arranged by the All-Ceylon Liberal League, 21 December 1931[1]

Board of Ministers Castigated

Government's Financial Policy Under Fire

Root Cause of Evil

Protest Meeting Against Further Taxation

A public meeting was held yesterday evening at the Town Hall, under the auspices of the All-Ceylon Liberal League, to protest against the present financial policy of Government.

Mr. Francis de Zoysa, K. C., who presided, made a strong case for retrenchment of the establishment charges of Government before the introduction of any further taxation. He maintained that the root cause of the present troubles was the Donoughmore Constitution which urgently needed reform.

Mr. H. A. P. Sandrasagara, K. C., moved the main resolution demanding a definite policy in regard to retrenchment.

Dr. S. C. Paul proposed another resolution asking the Government to appoint a commission for revising the present system of taxation.

The last resolution demanded the publication of correspondence between the Government and Downing Street on the salaries cut of Public Servants and the introduction of the Income Tax in the State Council.

The Case for Reform

The proceedings commenced at 5 p.m., only ticket holders being admitted to the Hall. The attendance included a number of ladies, European as well as Ceylonese.

1. *CDN*, 22 December 1931.

Mr. Francis de Zoysa, K.C., presided. The others on the platform were Messrs. E. W. Perera, H. A. P. Sandrasagara, K.C., F. H. B. Koch, K Balasingham, P. B. Nugawela, N H M. Abdul Cader, Dr. S. C. Paul, Messrs. C E. A. Dias, O. B. de Silva, A. M. Brodie, C. D. Carolis, W. E. Bastian, and Messrs N E Weerasuriya and A. Gnanaprakasam (Honorary Secretaries).

The receipt of several telegrams from outstations supporting the object of the meeting, were announced They were from Mannar, Kurunegala, Kalutara, Galle and Nuwara Eliya

Chairman's Address

Mr. Francis de Zoysa, addressing the meeting, said· "Ladies and gentlemen,—I hope I shall not be dampening your enthusiasm very much when I say that it was not with any very great enthusiasm that I myself came to this meeting. To tell you the truth I am tired of public meetings I am tired of making speeches I am still more tired of listening to speeches and possibly still more tired of reading speeches of which we had a surfeit of late.

We may assemble in public meetings, speak for hours and pass resolutions of protest against this, condemning that and urging the other, or requesting something else, but so far as our experience in the recent past at all events goes, these resolutions and these meetings seem to do very little good. Who cares, ladies and gentlemen, for protest meetings or resolutions? Certainly not His Excellency the Governor and his three assistants, the Officers of State, who are ruling the country. I could almost see the cynical smiles on the faces of those gentlemen on receiving the news of our protest meeting and the resolutions that we are passing. They make no secret of the utter contempt which they have for public opinion, for the opinion of the Press and even for the opinion of the State Council so long as they have a servile Board of Ministers to do their bidding (shame).

Callous Ministers

As for any good these resolutions can do by way of influencing the present Government, I have very serious doubt.

Then as regards the Board of Ministers, they are absolutely indifferent, as you know, to public opinion and public meetings. So long as they are comfortable in their chairs, so long as they can strut about looking very important, calling themselves Ministers and of being addressed 'Sir' by those who would not have deigned to look at them some time ago, so long as they could go about the country and get receptions, be garlanded and taken in procession, so long as they get up at public meetings and bore their audiences for hours with the veriest inanities, so long as they could indulge in vulgar jokes which they should be ashamed of uttering not only in public but even in private, so long as they could do these things and say triumphantly, 'Wherever we go civil servants are ready to meet our wishes ; we can go round the country and even during Christmas, but only send word and there are these officers waiting at every point.' They will not, I feel sure, pay any attention to public opinion."

On Deaf Ears

Continuing, Mr. De Zoysa said that though he had referred to the Ministers, he would exclude one of the Ministers in his remarks and not criticise him because he had been once beaten at the polls by that Minister. There was also a member of the State Council whom he would not criticise as he too had beaten him (the speaker) at the polls and he hoped that member would soon become a Minister. He also hoped that when that member became a Minister he would behave better than the others.

He thought it was hopeless their passing resolutions and expecting any good to result therefrom.

Meetings had been held in the country recently without the least effect being produced on either the Ministers or on the State Council, or even the real Government of Ceylon,

namely, His Excellency the Governor and the three whom his honourable friend, Mr. E. W. Perera, referred to as three policemen in plain clothes (laughter). They were assembled to protest against the financial policy of Government.

The Root of the Evil

What was the good of protesting against the financial policy of Government when the Government were the masters of the situation ? Their protests could do absolutely nothing whatever to move them from the path they have set for themselves.

What they must try to do was to try and remove the root of the evil. Until and unless the present Constitution was reformed and they had a proper Constitution, and a Government that would be responsible to the people of the country, he felt that their protests would be of very little use. It was only when they had a national Government, a Government which would be responsible to the people, that the people could influence the Government's decisions. Till then he despaired of any good coming out of any meeting. Therefore, before anything else was done—he did not say that they must not constitute to protest against misgovernment of the country—they must strike at the root of the evil and that was to get the Constitution reformed as soon as possible When they had a Government which had control over the finances, then financial policy would be all right.

Absolutely Powerless

They knew that the Ministers were absolutely powerless to put into force any policy of their own in regard to finances. The State Council was powerless. They had ample proof of it. The State Councillors were now realising their real position. One State Councillor, at all events, had the courage [*sic*] when he gave notice of a motion to the effect that the Ministers were puppets and the State Council a glorified debating club. The Ministers were determined to

reform of the Constitution, as a 4 per cent. Council could not do that so effectively as one which represented a 100 per cent electorate, and that the authorities could not resist the appeal. That was the argument that they advanced. They even said that they were doing that to push the scheme through with the assistance and co-operation of the European capitalists whom they were now letting down. Why the present matter was taken up was not because they wanted to make common cause with the European capitalists, but because they had taken the right view. The European capitalists did help the Ministers to become Ministers. At least two Ministers owed their position to the Europeans. It therefore came with ill-grace from the very men when they said: "We don't alter our views to please the Europeans." The Europeans held the same views in regard to the financial situation. Then why should they disassociate themselves from the Europeans.

What the Congress Did

Here he would tell them what the Congress did when the Donoughmore Scheme was passed. The resolution passed by Congress was in the following terms: "This Congress re-affirms its demand for full responsible Government at the next reform of the Constitution, but pending such reform recommends the acceptance for a short period of the proposed Donoughmore Scheme."

Pending reforms it was that Congress was willing to give a mandate to accept the scheme and the term "pending" apparently was very elastic and the short time was being stretched to three years. The Toady Party which was inaugurated the other day was prepared to wait three years for reform. These were the people who at first were for rejecting the Donoughmore Scheme and suddenly changed their mind and accepted it.

The School of Experience

There were a certain class of people in Ceylon who would learn only in the school of experience. That was a sort of camouflage as illustrated by Mr. Bandaranaike who said

that if any time the Officers of State or the Governor or the Secretary of State acted unreasonably in any matter against the wishes of the Council and did not give the Constitution a fair trial, then they would be justified in going out of the Council. They knew that the proposal of the Board of Ministers to grant passage allowances once in five instead of four years to public servants was brushed aside by the Governor. Yet these men would remain in Council and try to give the Constitution a trial. It was utterly absurd to try to reform the fiscal policy without reforming the Constitution and striking at the root of the evil. The Government financial policy could be explained in two words. It was to tax the people as much as possible. It did not matter directly or indirectly, whether the money came from Chetties, Borahs or European capitalists. It did not matter whether it was by raising an Income Tax or increasing the import duties on sugar, kerosene, cotton goods, etc. It did not matter how money must be found.

The Bloated Staff

That was the fiscal policy of Government. It was not for the promotion of national service or for the alleviation of the sufferings of the poor taxpayers. No wonder that people grumbled and growled that the money was for the purpose of maintaining the bloated staff and establishment of Government. It was a Minister who said the other day at an outstation that if, after passing the Income Tax, they could not take away the burden of taxation from the poor people, he would go to jail. Yet these men had the hardihood to say that the money was required to balance the budget and to pay the officers their salaries. The establishments could not be reduced nor could the officers be sent away.

"I have my own views about Income Tax," added Mr. De Zoysa in conclusion. "I don't agree with my European, Borah, Chetty or capitalist friends or anybody else on all points. We are not concerned with any particular tax. We are concerned only with the policy of taxation before retrenchment. We say retrenchment must begin first You will notice that for 1932-33 the Financial Secretary

stated in Council the other day that the same amount of expenditure is to be incurred as in the previous year, Rs. 104,000,000. No attempt was made to reduce salaries or to cut down establishments and their upkeep.

How the Money Goes

That is how our money goes. Money must come from somewhere, from the European capitalist, the Borah merchant or the Chetty moneylender. All people with an income will be taxed. The people who will be most hard hit will be our own people. The European capitalist can well afford to pay. I am sure they will not be bankrupt if they pay. I mean the real capitalist, not the European employed on an estate or as assistant in a mercantile firm. The villager who had an income of Rs. 200 a month will have to pay Income Tax to begin with. We do not know how much further it will go later. I can foresee a time when our people will be swelling our jails when the Income Tax becomes law. It is poor people who will not be able to pay and be sent to jail and also by lapses in filling the returns too they will be sent to jail. It is our people who will suffer (applause). Now let us consider the financial policy of Government."

The First Resolution

Mr. H. A. P. Sandrasagara, K.C., moved the following resolution :

> This meeting protests against the present financial policy of the Government, and demands that a definite policy in regard to retrenchment in public expenditure be laid down and an effective scheme of retrenchment be adopted by the Government at the earliest opportunity, and urges on the State Council the paramount necessity of refusing to consent to further taxation in any form, except with a view to meeting the deficit in the Budget for the year 1931-32, until the country's demand for retrenchment is given effect to.

Mr. Sandrasagara began by saying that he wished to clear a wrong impression which had been created that those who were opposing the imposition of Insome Tax were influenced by Chetties, Borahs and European capitalists. He for his part entirely repudiated the insinuation that he was briefed by anybody. When he was in the last Legislative Council, he had occasion to propose the docking of the salaries of Government Servants and one member who voted against it was that unctuous and sanctimonious European called Mr. Cary (laughter). But that gentleman's attitude today was quite different. He was for cutting down the salaries of European Civil Servants and was against the Income Tax. But that was not the reason why he (the speaker) was there. There were other reasons. He was there at nobody's bidding. It might be said that he was blessed with the world's goods. He had not and what is more although he lacked the world's goods he had something which others had not, namely, brains which as a rule never went with worldly goods.

To Send the Chetty Away

At the same time if tomorrow legislation was introduced to send the Chetty away, he would be the first to lead the movement He had no love for the Chetty so that the insinuation about holding briefs for Chetties, Borahs and Europeans did not hold. He consented to speak on that occasion entirely in the interests of the people. His attitude was that retrenchment must precede taxation. Expenditure must be cut to the bone and then if that was found insufficient and further taxation become necessary, he was for Income Tax but not for the purpose of maintaining a bloated staff and to keep Government servants in comfort and play them exorbitant salaries. A sort of diplomacy which flourished in Iraq appeared to have been introduced here. They were told in definite terms that Government would not consent to a cut in salaries of Public Servants unless an Income Tax was agreed to by the State Council.

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A Private Matter

When the Secretary of State was asked if he said so, he was surprised and said that he never intended to dictate to the Ministers. But Sir Bernard Bourdillon confronted with the logicality of the issue hastened to add that the thing was private and was not to be pried into by any others. In law there was an accepted theory that if a man possessed certain facts which he would not divulge, the onus of proving that he had not was on him and the inference was that he was keeping back the facts. He would not say a word against the Governor but place him on a pedestal far above controversial matters. It was the Chief Secretary who was responsible for the illogicality. It was characteristic of the Chief Secretary to eat his own words. The State Council had been bullied into accepting the Income Tax without paying any regard to the growing need of [*sic*] that [*sic*] there was for retrenchment. They must first take steps to retard the gradual growth of the incubus of the government salaries.

The Upward Curve

Mr. Sandrasagara read out certain figures showing how the cost of establishment and personal emoluments had gone on increasing. In 1921-22 the revenue was Rs. 97 million odd and the personal emoluments cost Rs. 21 million odd. In 1916-17 the revenue was Rs. 48 million odd and personal emoluments were Rs. 12 million odd, a rise of nearly 45 per cent in four years. In the Retrenchment Committee Report it was stated that although the cadre was not increased the salaries had gone up considerably high [*sic*]. In eight years the personal emoluments had doubled and at present the personal emoluments totalled 40 per cent of the revenue. There were at present 147 Civil Servants who drew Rs. 2,274,317 and 202 Civil Servants and other Special Officers who drew Rs. 3,028,600 and 3,147 clerks who drew Rs. 4,488,600 and about 30,000 other remaining servants who drew Rs. 35,114,000 approximately. There were 45 per cent drawing Rs. 1,073,000 and 229 were drawing Rs. 3,173,000 while 471 drew Rs. 3,744,000. The

feature was that 745 men were drawing eight million rupees in 1931-32. That was the manner in which the money had been spent.

They never visualised that lean years would come but went on increasing salaries and thus burdened the country with a heavy establishment. An example of the utter disregard paid to recommendations of the Retrenchment Committee for 1922 for the abolition of the Mineralogical Department was shown by the fact that the Mineralogist was retained to discover places to sink wells, a job that any villager could do. Ceylon like every other country in the world was today in the slump. Her chief articles, tea, rubber and coconut, were down and very few derived any income therefrom. What other article of trade had they? Could they trade on poultry, vegetables or dry fish? What were they trying to do with a country which evoked rapturous encomiums from Mr. Lloyd George? It was being ruined by a diplomat from Iraq. There were several directions in which they could reduce establishment charges. The Irrigation Department could be run cheaper although it had done least for cultivation so far. Irrigation had not produced one grain of paddy more. He was reminded of the recent plan of the "youthful enthusiast Banda," the President of the Congress who proposed a five-year plan for paddy cultivation. Mr. Bandaranaike was proposing things on the lines of the Dawes plan or the Young plan in connection with the settling of war debts. He was trying to do what had been tried for half a century and failed. Of course, he comes from Oxford and now in the habiliments of a respectable cooly he was going about the task of the regeneration of Ceylon during the next five years. Let him try it. That would be his doing.

Plain Living and High Thinking

Concluding, he referred to the Jaffna boycott of the Council and the wisdom of the Jaffna man [illegible] [illegible] Ceylon was [illegible] plain living and high thinking. The situation could only be

remedied by a radical change in the manner in which they were governed and that could only be done by a reform of the Constitution.

The proposal had been put forward that the salaries of public servants should be standardised on a Ceylonese basis, so as to maintain a Ceylonese officer in reasonable comfort, with an overseas allowance in cases where overseas officers were appointed to any post, such allowance to be non-pensionable. That was a perfectly legitimate position for them to assume, but that had been stoutly opposed by the government. The higher salaries, to overseas officers were based on the plea that they had to have two establishments, one here and the other in England. But if he was to be given a special salary because an overseas officer had commitments in England, why should he also get a special allowance—the passage allowance—based on the footing that such officer's family was resident in Ceylon, merely to provide for them a holiday abroad at public expense.

Monstrous Amount

That special allowance which started in 1919 with Rs. 20,000 had now grown to a monstrous amount—Rs. 450,000. It was not a liability which was fixed on them by any contractual obligations. It was a liability which their tender hearts had in the past persuaded them to assume at a time when the War was going on. Still, when they desired to vary the term of grant of passages, from once in four years to once in five years, the Government said that it was going to do nothing of the kind.

The position the government had taken up was this: We could quite conceive that you are very badly off, the country is on the verge of bankruptcy, but we will bleed you and the country to pay the public servants. That was not a new dictum, said Mr. Sandrasagara, that was the old dictum of British government in his country. It had been the policy of the British Administration to bleed the country for its own benefit. No less a person than Lord Salisbury had said the same of the aim of British Administration in India.

That was why the country was today insisting that retrenchment must precede any attempt to impose any additional taxation. He did not know how the ministers were going to face the music when they came to impose not merely the income tax but further taxes on the requirements of the poor, like rice, coriander, sugar and kerosene and every other article which entered into the daily life of the poor. There were such people as those who believed that taxation on such articles were [sic] going to drive the people to the cultivation of the soil and to a production of the articles which were going to be taxed. He did not see how taxation would enable the people of this country to produce kerosene oil and sugar for instance. The trouble would come when the Ministers would be hailed with rotten eggs, when they had decided to tax further every imaginable article of food-stuffs and other necessaries of life.

A Very Drastic Measure

After all who were the men with money in their hands today, but the public servants, for whom the automatic reduction in the cost of living, occasioned by the prevalent depression, had brought in an automatic increase in their salaries by an increase of their purchasing capacity? A very drastic but withal a necessary measure of retrenchment would be to retire all men who had reached 55 years of age, which would lead to a reorganisation of the department and a reduction in the personal emoluments. Ireland was running her Free State and had so thoroughly reorganised her departments and was employing as little taxation as possible that her Government was now placed on quite a businesslike footing, and now she was running the great Irish Sweep Stakes. Some Ministers here growled that it was immoral, but after all what was not immoral? Even if you sneeze a little too much it would be immoral (laughter). The fact, however, remained that the Irish Sweep Stakes were doing for the Irish Hospitals immense benefit, which nothing else could do Not that he advocated a Sweep Stake here, but he asserted that a reduction of public servants' salaries was imperative before any further taxation.

"A Kruger"

When in the Legislative Council the speaker moved a motion for the reduction of the salaries of public servants by 10 per cent there was one gentleman whom he described as Kruger—the man with the bible in one hand the gun in the other—who uttered beautiful moralising sentiments, never forgetting that he had two sons in the service and a son-in-law, and that gentleman was responsible for the defeat of his motion.

The manner in which the State Council had been bullied into the position of accepting the Income Tax by the government smacked of dishonesty—he would not put it more strongly there, although if he was charged in a Court of law he would go the whole hog and call it dishonesty (applause).

They would not have been in that position if they had all Liberal ministers, as they might have had, if not for the foolish and misguided European members who joined the Congress on the mistaken assumption that thereby they were enlisting the support of a large party.

Fight to the Last Ditch

So far as self-government was concerned they knew that their European friends would say " no " and would fight them to the last ditch and there was no particular reason, therefore, why they should consult their convenience in such matters. But on the present question before them, they were in the same boat and were working with the same will and were fighting together this time for the benefit of the entire country (applause).

Resolution Seconded

Mr. H. K. P. de Zilva, in seconding the resolution, said that his friend Mr. Sandrasagara had so very effectively said what was necessary to be said of the resolution dealing with such an important question, that he felt that they were all thoroughly convinced that the financial policy of the Government was absolutely wrong and mistaken. He wished to

put before them one little fact, namely, if they saw a patient lying in bed with some dire disease, and all the doctors in Ceylon, eminent as they were, trying to treat the patient without first having had a good look at him, they would need hardly to be told that bottles and bottles of medicine poured down the patient's throat, would do very little good

Only "Sensible" Thing

The only sensible thing to be done in such a case would be to accurately diagnose the case and prescribe accordingly. The real trouble, the actual disease which afflicted the Government today was that their expenditure was exceeding its revenue by 21 million rupees and the only effective method available to them was to practise effective retrenchment in the expenditure, so as to bring it down to the level of the revenue available But instead of doing that, what did the Government propose to do? Their so-called Ministers—who had very rightly been called puppets—were trying to bring ruination upon the country by the imposition of an Income Tax, which would not only affect the so-called rich, as the members of the Labour Union expected, but also automatically come upon the heads of the poorer Ceylonese, for if the Income Tax was passed a reduction of staff and the salaries of employees in vast numbers would at once follow. And for that reason only the possibility was that the 10 per cent levied on their incomes would be found by retrenchment resulting in the production in plenty of unemployment in the country and the consequent misery

Position In Other Countries

Mr. A. Gnanaprakasam, in supporting the resolution, which he began by reading (as it had not been read up to that time), discussed the question as to whether retrenchment was possible. What was the position in other countries which were similarly placed as this island in the matter of balancing the budget?

In America, two years after the War a Retrenchment Commission was appointed and retrenchment to the tune of Rs. 250,000 dollars, equivalent to Rs. 750,000, representing 10 years revenue of this country, was effected.

In England, too, it had been made possible by means of the Geddes axe and the exertions of Mr. Lloyd George. Here in Ceylon, as well, he had no doubt that retrenchment before taxation was possible and practicable. Take for instance the Governor's salary. In 1928 the Governor's establishment had cost the country Rs. 300,000 whereas the Prime Minister of England, the man at the helm of the greatest Empire of modern times, was paid about Rs. 75,000. He had no grievance against Sir Graeme Thomson, but he protested against the state of things which had made that possible.

"Naughty Schoolboys"

The Donoughmore Commissioners, to add to this, apparently to punish them, naughty schoolboys, for asking for more liberty, saw to it that the Governor's salary was still further increased from £2,400 to £3,000. What was the justification for this? Had the revenue of the country been increased by the 25 per cent by which the Governor's salary had been increased? Then again, the salary of the Financial Secretary, the Chief Secretary, and the Attorney-General, had also been increased although in the case of the last two their work had considerably been diminished under the new administration.

Lord Passfield's Excuse

Lord Passfield's excuse for these unwarranted increases was "that in view of their responsibilities and the special qualities desirable" in these officers their salaries had been increased. Who gave those officers these special qualities which they had not possessed before, so that they might deserve this sudden increase of salary? (laughter and applause). Rather was it not that with a decrease of responsibility their salary had been increased? Continuing,

Mr. Gnanaprakasam contended that the Railway Department offered a large field for effective retrenchment, and retrenchment was absolutely possible.

The resolution was then put to the meeting and carried.

Call For A Commission

Dr. S. C. Paul then moved the following resolution:

This meeting calls upon Government to appoint a commission to prepare and submit a scheme for revising the present system of taxation:

(a) So as to make its incidence more equitable and less burdensome to the poorer classes; and

(b) To encourage the development of local industries by revising on a protectionist basis the system of tariffs now obtaining

In doing so Dr. Paul said that the economic health of Ceylon had not been very good for some years past. From the year 1927 it had shown incipient signs of diseas but in spite of that large sums of money had been spent. and the expenditure had been considerably increased. They found that for some time not only that the expenditure was increased over the income, but imports were in excess of exports, thus showing a very serious malady in the system. As a result of this both the State Council and the Municipal Council had been trying to deal with the malady only by attacking the symptoms, unemployment.

Quack Doctors

The State Council had now begun to realise the need of giving more attention to a diagnosis of the disease rather than deal [*sic*] solely with the symptoms, but he was afraid that both the State Council and the Municipal Council were in the position of quack doctors in this matter. What was of first rate importance was a body of economic experts, and of businessmen who could go into the question thoroughly. Instead of doing that, the State Council had

gone on for weeks and weeks engaging themselves in futile efforts to retrench and could not retrench. They had to bear in mind that the depression affected not only them of this country but the whole world. This was not the time for social legislation, for the masses to be swaddled in cotton wool. Such measures must await times of prosperity. The situation he felt had been greatly complicated by the fact that the Donoughmore Commissioners had given them a Government by compromise : compromise between the Ministers and their Secretaries who were entrusted with the direction of affairs; compromise between the Ministers themselves ; compromise between Ministers and the members of the Committees and compromise between the members themselves.

A Great Drawback

Government by this sort of compromise had been one of the great drawbacks in the administration of affairs in this country. As regards methods of finding revenue to balance the budget, the speaker thought that the Railway Department alone should, if properly handled, be able to make up sufficient to cover the deficit which they were faced with. But it was not possible for any Government official to run any department successfully as a commercial proposition, such as was the case in commercial business undertakings, in which the directors of such undertakings were themselves shareholders and as such had a stake in the fortunes of the business under their direction. Of course, it was not so with the Government undertakings. Another reason for that failure was the fact that heads of departments found that they had to enter into compromises with the members of the State Council which compromising, although resulting in loss of revenue to the Government, was found necessary if those heads of departments were to save themselves from being made the target of attack in the State Council.

Not A National Asset

As it was, people did not look upon the Railway as a national asset, as was evidenced in their preference of [*sic*] the motor transport to the Railway, which would be far better if it was controlled by a Company. He would apply the same remarks to the hydro-electric scheme, for which a very good offer had been made by a firm in England, but which had been refused by the Council on the ground that it was a national asset. He asked, were they going to run the hydro-electric scheme with any more success than the Railway Department? It was not possible for the Government to run any revenue earning department with any success and therefore it would be far better if it was allowed to be run by somebody else who could do it.

Income Tax

Coming to the question of Income Tax, he referred to what had happened in England, where 90 per cent of the tax being collected from the class of people who were made liable to that payment of direct taxation, all that money was spent on social services for the large majority of the uneducated masses, who formed the 10 per cent with the result that capital was now rapidly diminishing and all those who had been paying the super tax and taxes on their incomes, were now gradually coming down lower and lower, approaching the scale when they would soon have to pay nothing by way of Income Tax. Such a state of things would also arise in Ceylon (applause). Without capital, they must remember, it was not possible to make any progress as regard industrial and agricultural advancement of the country. As regards the terms of his motion he personally believed that a protectionist tariff was not advisable, but the problem was too difficult for a layman to solve and it was desirable that the whole matter should be thrashed out by a competent committee, composed of an equal number of economic experts, scientific experts and practical businessmen (applause).

To Retain Revenue

P. B. Nugawela Dissawe, seconding the resolution (speaking in Sinhalese), said that the question they had to consider was how to retain the revenue produced in this country in the Island for the benefit of the people. As it was, the revenue was being drained out of the country largely in the way of personal emoluments and import duties. Another matter of great importance was to get the entire control of the finance of this country into the hands of the representatives of the people (applause) and not allow their revenue to be doled out to them as outsiders liked.

Mr. A. M. Brodie, supporting the resolution, said that the whole trouble was due to the rottenness of the financial policy of this country, which gave a carte blanche to the Government and in which the people of this country had no voice. He protested against the suggestion of Dr. Paul that such national assets as the hydro-electric scheme and the Railway should be bartered away to foreigners.

The resolution was then put to the meeting and carried.

The Government's Secret

Mr. O. B. de Silva next moved:

> This meeting demands the publication of all correspondence between the Government of Ceylon and the Secretary of State for the Colonies relating to the cut in the salaries of Public Servants and the introduction of an Income Tax Bill in the State Council.

Mr. J. A. Halangoda seconded, and the resolution was carried.

The meeting then ended.

24. SPECIAL SESSIONS, 14 May 1932

24 : A. Agenda : Resolutions

Ananda College Hall, Colombo

The Ceylon National Congress demands the immediate amendment of the Constitution in the following respects, for the removal of those defects, which have now become apparent, particularly owing to the failure of the Officials to co-operate with the State Council in working the new Constitution in the liberal spirit that was intended at its inauguration :

(a) Governor's Powers

(1) The repeal of Article 22 of the Order-in-Council which confers powers of certification on the Governor.

(2) The repeal of Articles 78 and 80 of the Order-in-Council which empower the Governor to postpone the operation of a Bill or to require that a particular Bill should be passed by a two-thirds majority.

(3) The amendment of the Royal Instructions to provide that the subjects in respect of which the Governor may refuse his assent to a Bill should be restricted to those relating to religious or communal discrimination.

(b) Public Purse and Public Services

(1) The amendment of Article 61 of the Order-in-Council to provide that any payment from the public funds contemplated by this Article should be made with the authority of the Board of Ministers instead of the Governor.

(2) The amendment of Article 86 of the Order-in-Council to provide that,

(*a*) appointments of a class which is common to every branch of the establishment, the holders being inter-changeable, should be made with the approval of the Board of Ministers;

(*b*) appointments of a class which is not common to the whole establishment, but which is common to two or more Government Departments not controlled by the same Minister and Executive Committee, should be made with the approval of the Board of Ministers;

(c) appointments of a class which is confined to one Department only, or to two or more Departments controlled by the same Minister and Executive Committee, should be made with the approval of the Minister and Executive Committee concerned.

(3) Article 87 of the Order-in-Council should be amended deleting the provision requiring the prior consent of the Governor to the introduction of any Bill mentioned therein, or the assent of the Secretary of State.

(4) The repeal of Article 91 of the Order-in-Council, which fixes the Salaries of the Governor and the Officers of State and exempts the Governor's Salary from Income Tax.

(c) Officers of State

The abolition of the Officers of State and the vesting of their functions in Ministers elected by the State Council.

(*d*) Committee System and Election of Ministers

The amendment of Article 35 of the Order-in-Council to provide for the election of Ministers by the State Council and not by the Executive Committees.

(e) The King's Concurrent Powers of Legislation

The repeal of the proviso to Article 72 of the Order-in-Council which vests in the King in Privy Council power to make laws for the peace, order and good government of the Island.

(Sgd.) R. S. S. Gunewardene,
A. W. H. Abeyesundere,
Hony. Secretaries,
Ceylon National Congress.

Colombo, 14.5 32.

24 : B. Newspaper Report on the Sessions[1]

Congress Re-Defines Its Policy

Resolution For Full Self-Government

We ask for the deletion of the Governor's powers to legislate himself, to hamper legislation and to refuse assent to certain classes of legislation and the deletion of the King's powers of legislation. We also ask for full power of the Public Purse, particularly by securing an adequate control over the public services. We further demand full responsible government which is our goal, by the abolition of the Officers of State, said Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike in the course of his presidential address at the special session of the Ceylon National Congress held on Saturday afternoon.

A resolution worded on the lines suggested by the passage quoted above was proposed by Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara and was, after discussion, carried unanimously.

Control Over Public Services

A special sessions of the Ceylon National Congress for the purpose of requesting the immediate amendment of the Constitution in certain respects was held on Saturday

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afternoon at Ananda College. Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, the President of the Congress, presided and there was a fairly large number of delegates present.

Among the members of the State Council present were: Sir Baron Jayatilaka, Messrs. C. W. W. Kannangara, D. S. Senanayake, Forrester Obeyesekere, W. A. de Silva, E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, Geo. E. de Silva, G. K. W. Perera, G. C. S. Corea, H. W. Amarasuriya and A. E. Goonesinha.

Lady Dias Bandaranaike and Mrs. Naysum Saravanamuttu were also accommodated on the platform.

Proceedings began at 2.15 p.m. with the address from the President.

Chairman's Address

Mr. Bandaranaike, in the course of his speech, said this special session of the Ceylon National Congress had been summoned to consider a matter not only of vital importance to the country but one which came peculiarly within the province of Congress which was formed for the purpose of working for Full Responsible Government.

They may remember that at the last annual sessions they accepted the resolution that "while being prepared to give the present Constitution a fair trial, the Ceylon National Congress is strongly of opinion that early steps be taken to remedy defects in its working and that a revision of the Constitution be made within a period not exceeding three years in order to secure a full measure of responsible Government."

A Fair Trial

In his presidential address on that occasion he had explained in detail their attitude towards the Donoughmore Constitution. He said that they had accepted that Constitution as it was undoubtedly an advance on the previous Constitution in many respects and gave them the chance of doing a great deal of useful work for the country. They were prepared to give the Constitution a fair trial, but he was

careful to point out that there were two parties concerned in giving it that fair trial, the members of the Council on the one hand and the officials on the other. He had said that if the Secretary of State, or the Governor, or the Officers of State acted unreasonably against the wishes of the Council in any matter of real importance, then they would be preventing a fair trial being given to the Constitution and they would be justified in taking action.

Official Attitude

He had realized that the powers vested in the Secretary of State, the Governor, and the Officers of State by the Order-in-Council were so wide and ill-defined that it was possible for them, if they chose to do so, to render illusory the power and control of the people. It was also possible for them, if they chose, by a judicious exercise of their powers to ensure the satisfactory working of the Constitution.

How had the officials co-operated with the State Council ? asked Mr. Bandaranaike. A very reasonable request made by the State Council that in these times of financial difficulties the purely temporary concession made to Government servants after the War of leave passage allowances oncé in four years had been refused by the Secretary of State. presumably on the advice of the Governor.

The equally reasonable request that the State Council should be consulted before any order is made by the Governor under the Bill enabling a levy on the salaries of Public Officers was also refused.

It would thus be seen that although the officials had been proved accommodating in matters of small moment yet in matters of real importance they appeared not only to have used the large powers vested in them by the Order-in-Council but even to claim powers which, it was doubtful, were even contemplated by the Order-in-Council.

What has been done

Continuing, Mr. Bandaranaike said that a certain amount of work had undoubtedly been done by the State Council; to mention a few, the quick relief given to the unemployed, the rapidity with which the Peasant Proprietors' Schemes had been proceeded with, the Debtors' Relief Bill, the Bill abolishing the Official Chairmen of the Village Committees, the Workmen's Compensation Act and the Bill to Decontrol Education, which will soon come up before the State Council.

But these achievements, valuable as they were, really did not amount to much.

In the present state of the country which seemed to be steadily worsening it was the big scheme that was going to be of real benefit at all; a drastic restriction of immigration, a far reaching State scheme for paddy cultivation, a fostering of home industries by the imposition of protective tariffs and drastic retrenchment in the cost of establishments—it was doubtful to him whether they had the power at present to do any of these things.

Not the Time for Abuse

He must confess, he said, that he was greatly disappointed in the presidential address of Mr. Francis de Zoysa at the annual meeting of the Liberal League last Saturday. By far the larger portion of his address consisted of an attack on Congress in general and the speaker and other Congressmen in particular. (Mr. Geo E. de Silva: Leave him alone). If such an elderly person as himself would permit the "Boy President" of Congress to give him an elementary lesson in statesmanship, he should like to say that this was hardly the time for them to waste their energy in abusing and devouring each other; that if their demands meant anything more than mere words they must cast aside petty bickerings amongst themselves and must all join hands and present as united a front as possible in their common fight (applause).

He was pleased that the Liberal League had incorporated in one of their resolutions a suggestion he had made regarding a Round Table Conference. As his intention did not appear to be clearly understood, he said that what he had in mind was not so much a general conference but the formation of the National Committee drawn from such parties and sections of the people as were willing to co-operate on the issue of Constitutional Reform in order to form a National Organization, to carry on propaganda and create public opinion throughout the country.

Lesson From India

What had been happening in India was enough to convince any reasonable person of the reluctance of the British to give any real power into the hands of a subject race.

All history taught them that the road to freedom was an arduous and painful one. He had not the least doubt that without a great deal of suffering and sacrifice they would never be able to obtain the substance of their demands.

He realised only too well the power that was wielded by the press in moulding and directing public opinion, and in asking for the co-operation of other parties and sections at this time, he also appealed for the co-operation of the press to help them constructively in launching a scheme for the creation of a National Committee as indicated by him and in helping them to create and consolidate public opinion to be ready to take all steps necessary to ensure the success of their demands.

Conspicuous by Absence

He had to confess with disappointment that the conditions the existence of which alone would have rendered the working of this Constitution satisfactory and which he had expected would exist, had been conspicuous by their absence. He was, however, more than ever confirmed in his opinion that they were right in accepting the Constitution in order to give it a trial, for that alone had

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enabled all of them to see what the *defects actually were* in working and to secure a unity *in their demands for its* amendment which would otherwise never have existed.

Their Demands

The resolution that would be placed before them, asked for the deletion of the Governor's powers to legislate himself, to hamper legislation and to refuse assent to certain classes of legislation and the deletion of the King's powers of legislation.

He had already pointed out to them how some of the powers of the Governor had been abused and he felt that, if they were to function effectively, these powers should be removed.

They were also asking for full power of the Public Purse *particularly by securing an adequate control over* the Public Services. *They further demand Full Responsible* Government which was their goal, by the abolition of the Officers of State.

A great deal could be said for and against the Committee system, but as a member of Council himself who was serving on a Committee he felt that *at any rate for the present the advantages of a Committee system outweighed its disadvantages.*

Election of Ministers

The objection to our suggestion that Ministers should be elected by the whole Council was not convincing. Even at present there were Ministers who had not been elected by a majority of their Committees. It did not appear necessary for a Minister to be always sure of support by a majority of his Committee; *it was more important that he should have the support of a majority of the House.*

He earnestly hoped that the resolution would have their careful consideration in all its implications and that they would not merely be ready to pass it, but take all action that was required from time to time in order to insure its success.

The Resolution

The Hon. Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara proposed the following resolution: [see agenda above, item 29: A].

Speaking in support of the resolution, Mr. Kannangara said that it was a somewhat lengthy one and was therefore sub-divided into several portions. It might be that some might not agree with certain portions of it However it was for those present to discuss the resolution in detail. It was the opinion of everybody in Ceylon that full responsible Government must be obtained as soon as possible.

The National Congress accepted the Donoughmore Constitution in that hope but, after the Committee system had been worked, it was now found that the Constitution required remedying in many important respects.

In his message to the State Council on its inauguration the Governor had admitted that the period of transition from the old system to the new was taken at a most inauspicious time and that the new system of government was going to be a trying one and that those who were entrusted with the task had accepted great responsibility for the proper discharge of their duty. The revenue of the country had fallen and the Treasury was considerably depleted.

The Governor realised that the task was possible only by co-operation and goodwill between the elected members and the Officers of State.

Many Enemies

When the Constitution was accepted there were many enemies and detractors who tried to exaggerate the difficulties and levelled criticism in almost a revengeful spirit. He reminded them when the National Congress accepted the Constitution it was with the determination to give it a fair trial and that early steps be taken to remedy the defects in its working and to demand a revision of the Constitution within a period not exceeding three years.

That was what they were going to do now. Let them take a lesson from India and instead of abusing at every turn the members of the State Council and asking them to resign their seats to unite and make a unanimous demand for a reform of the Constitution.

Fathered on Council

According to the newspapers every adverse happening in the country, including the rise in the price of rubber, was saddled on the shoulders of the State Council. In the recent past the price of fish in Galle went up in price. It was immediately attributed to Mr. Kannangara who raised his salary by Rs. 500 (laughter).

Indulgence in vituperation, abuse and vilification was easy enough but none of those who criticised had so far suggested a remedy or put forward a constructive proposal.

No Complete Control

There were many who imagined that the elected members possessed the power of the purse and that since the acceptance of the Donoughmore Constitution that power was lost to them. That statement was absolutely false. In none of the earlier Councils had they complete control of the finances. Under the present Constitution there was more power vested in the elected members than before.

The power of certification which the Governor exercised five times during the short period of the existence of the present Council was no new thing. He possessed it before but on no occasion was it exercised.

Underlying Principle Bad

The principle underlying was bad and that power should be removed. There was another point in regard to the power of the Governor in making provision for payment from public funds for public servants. That power should be vested in the Board of Ministers. Otherwise it would not be possible to control salaries and emoluments.

There were other glaring defects to be remedied and it was to effect that purpose in a constitutional manner that the resolution was placed before them for their acceptance. Instead of blaming others and levelling abuse at the State Councillors they should all unite and the whole country should make a united demand.

Shattered Faith

Mr. G. C. S. Corea, in seconding the resolution, said that the thought that came uppermost to his mind with regard to that resolution was that the faith they had in British fairplay and in British promises was now shattered.

When the Donoughmore Constitution was first placed before them the Congress refused to accept it and Sir Herbert Stanley sent a despatch to the Secretary of State to which the latter replied. On the face of those two despatches and of certain amendments to the original Constitution the Congress decided to give it a trial. The time was now pertinent to consider why the Congress *decided to give the new Constitution a trial. The Congress* accepted it because it trusted what the Secretary of State *and the Governor of the Island said. They did not accept* the Constitution as originally offered to them because of the extraordinary powers granted to the Governor and they decided to give the amended Constitution a trial because in the subsequent despatch they were told that the powers vested in the Governor would only be used in extraordinary occasions to meet extraordinary situations.

There might be many people who had no confidence in what was stated in those despatches but now he had no *hesitation in saying that it was their fault that they trusted* those promises. They were not the only people whose faith in the promises of the British Government has been shattered. No less a man than Mahatma Gandhi has had to admit that his faith in the plighted word of British *statesmen had been rudely shattered.*

A Healthy Sign

With regard to the criticisms levelled at public men from political platforms and from the press they should be prepared for such criticisms when they take up public work. Many a man might say that the Congress was a caucus and that the Councillors stuck to their seats because of Rs. 400 a month. They need not lose their tempers or get afraid when such things were said of them. As their President had said that was not the time for abuse but the time for all of them to unite, whatever their differences were, and work wholeheartedly for the reform of the Constitution in the interests of the country.

Need of Action

Mr. W. A. de Silva, in supporting the resolution, said that by mere resolutions they could not get full responsible Government. Action was needed and they should supplement talk with action. With regard to the talk of promises being broken he wished to state openly that not a single promise that had been made with regard to the Constitution had been broken. It was futile for them to say so. There was a feeling everywhere in the country that it was only by the reform of the Constitution that the interests of the country could be properly advanced.

Not Quite a Success

They had accepted to give the Donoughmore Constitution a fair trial and they had done so and found that it was not the success that they expected it to be. It had been said that the British Government did not fulfil its promises. Promises were made to get out of difficult situations. They did not want the Donoughmore Constitution or any other Constitution, but a free responsible Constitution. With regard to press criticisms of which there was so much talk he wished to state that there was nothing more healthy for the public life of a country than a healthy press which urged men to work.

It was true that in the press there were exaggerations but that was in the nature of things. His conviction was that if the press attacked daily every public worker, the work would be done better and more rapidly.

The Committee System

Dr. S. Muttiah, in supporting the resolution, said that he endorsed the point of view taken by Congress in regard to the present Constitution. But during the short time the Constitution had been in operation grave defects had been discovered as stated by Mr. Kannangara who had intimate knowledge of the working of the Constitution both as a Minister and a Member of the State Council.

Mr. P. Somapala enquired whether there was any truth in the statement published that the Minister of Education had obtained an increase of Rs. 500 on his salary. He also wished to be enlightened on the necessity for the raising of the customs duty so soon after the Income Tax.

Mr. A. W. H. Abeyesundere rose to a point of order as to the relevancy of the question.

The President explained that the Income Tax was passed but no revenue would be derived therefrom till the end of the year. The raising of customs tariff was for the purpose of meeting a deficit in the Budget for 1931-32.

Another Gandhi?

Mr. R. P. Tillekeratna accused the Members of Council who had been Congressmen of forsaking those who had sent them to Council. He feared that the Congress had come on evil days since the death of Mr. F. R. Senanayake. However he had high hopes of a Gandhi soon appearing to save the country. In Mr. Bandaranaike the present President, he visualised one who could not be wooed with honours and titles. It was said that the National Congress was the cause of the strife in the country and the growth of other political bodies. He

always believed in Congress as the accredited body to ask for reforms as it had done in the past and his hopes were that there would be a union of all the political bodies in the country to make a united demand to obtain Swaraj.

Mr. D. A. Wijeyeratne said that there was an impression prevailing in the country that all the ills it was suffering today were the work of the Members of Council and that they were responsible for that state of things. Every morning the papers had nothing but abuse of the Ministers or Members. That was a very bad trait.

"Blandishments" of Queen's House

Mr. Geo. E. de Silva said they were assembled in special sessions to pass a resolution of far reaching importance to the people of this country. They were not there to hurl abuse on anyone but to consider and pass the resolution before them. If approved and they received what they demanded, the past glory of Lanka would be restored. They could not hope to get everything at once. They would not get what they wanted if they left their seats. They had read the speech made by the Governor at the dinner on Friday night in which he wished the Members of the State Council to call on him at Government Lodge. After being kicked about and humiliated who was the man, he asked, who would care to call on the Governor. The blandishments of Queen's House no longer tempted the people of this country.

Congress from its inception had Swaraj as its final goal and still stuck to it. The resolution which he had the honour of supporting was for the purpose of reforming the Council so that eventually they would attain full responsible self-government.

Governor's Powers

The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake, Minister of Agriculture, said that what he understood by that resolution was that a more responsible form of government was essential in

the interests of the country. One thing they proposed by that resolution was that the powers exercised by the Governor rightly or wrongly were not according to the wishes of the people and therefore should be removed. Let them consider why those extraordinary powers were given to the Governor. They would remember that when the Donoughmore Commissioners were recording evidence many witness had said that the people should not be given so much power unless certain other powers were given to the Governor.

A Birthright

The officers in the Public Service had also asked that such powers be given to the Governor. He thought that those powers should now be removed not because the Governor had used them wrongfully but because, if the country was fit to have responsible Ministers, those Ministers could be expected to do the work of the people in the best interests of the people. He supported that resolution not because he totally agreed with all that it contained but because he considered that full responsible Government was their birthright.

Public Servants' Support

In one part of the resolution it was stated that they did not get the co-operation of the Public Service. He did not know to whom it particularly referred, whether to the Governor or the Officers of State or to the Members of the Public Service. His own conviction was—and he said so without the slightest hesitation—that he had received all the support and co-operation that was necessary from the officers in the Public Service.

He also wished to tell them that every member in Council felt that he was there because he knew that by being there he could do something for his country. During the seven months that they were there they had done some good and no one in Council need be ashamed of their record of work. They accepted to work the Donoughmore

Constitution not because they pinned their faith on others but because they believed that they themselves could work it with success.

Removal of Defects

If they had come across defects and difficulties in the working of it they should have them removed. He did not say that the way that the Governor or the Secretary of State had exercised their powers was right or wrong but he wished to state that when they accepted the Constitution they knew that they could exercise those powers.

With regard to the question of the passages of public servants, for instance, they knew that it had been stated in a previous Council that whatever was done in Council in regard to them would be certified by the Governor. He also knew that the present Governor had been requested not to allow any cuts in the passage allowances or railway warrants. What they were now asking for in that resolution was their birthright.

No Unanimity

They could have asked for the same thing before they decided to accept the Donoughmore Constitution but, owing to there being no unanimity in the country and other difficulties, they could not do so then. There were many among them who were in the habit of abusing those who did not agree with them. Let them not say that because a man differed from them that he was a traitor to his country. Let them learn to respect the other man's views also. The friends of today might be the enemies of tomorrow. The only way they could progress as a nation was by acting as one.

Party System

There was a difference of opinion with regard to the Committee system. He was one of those who believed that a party system was not necessary for a parliamentary system of government. A Committee system was considered

necessary because of the weakness or the defects of the people. In England they thought that a party system of government was necessary but in Ceylon a man was elected to Council not on his party label but on the personal factor.

The people elected a man whom they thought would serve the interests of the country best and when conditions were such he did not understand how parties would be formed.

The Committee system might work well or it might not, but they knew that in this country people did not repose that trust in each other which was so essential.

A Misfortune

That might be a misfortune but nevertheless it was a fact. If they could not trust the member whom they themselves sent to Council and thought that he was there for monetary reasons what was the trust they were going to place on their men? The wanted all of them to become Gandhis but why did not the very people who wanted them to become Gandhis attempt to become Gandhis themselves, Nirvana was the goal of every Buddhist and why did not they try to attain it instead of saying that the other man did not try. Let them not look at things always from a jaundiced eye.

An Explanation

The Hon. Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara said that there was only one voice of opposition and that not against the resolution. That gentleman had asked a question from him with regard to his salary. The salary of the Minister of Education was Rs. 1,500 a month but for last year and this year it had been decided as Rs. 1,000 a month. The estimates for next year which could be altered by the Board of Ministers or by the Council were prepared by his Committee and in that the figure was put down as Rs. 1,500.

The resolution was then put to the house and was adopted unanimously.

Proceedings then ended with a vote of thanks to the chair proposed by Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya.

24 : C. Appendix to the Special Sessions

(1) Letter to the Editor, "Ceylon Daily News" from A. C. Chellarajah, 17 May 1932 : "The Congress Skeleton"[1]

Sir, The proceedings of the special sessions of the National Congress held on Saturday last provide a record of peculiar poignancy. I do not, of course, refer to the President's tumultuous output of torrential eloquence in which one finds no coherence, no underlying principle, no theory of government nor even an alternative program of action in the event of their pious resolution going unheeded. But the National Congress of Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam and Sir James Peiris, a revered body with a proud record of pioneer service in the fight for constitutional advance, is today the hideous incarnation of reaction and the happy hunting ground of immature and ambitious men whose only political be-all and end-all is their own personal kudos. The Congress, prior to 1926, was the undisputed month-piece of the country and was fully representative of all communities of the Island. Its influence was undoubted, so much so,. that even the imperious Governor Manning had to yield to its dictates. But since the lamentable Sinhalese-Tamil split its decline has been steady and today it is a platform for opportunism. Ever since the control of the Congress passed into the hands of the Big Five, it ceased to be a representative and democratic body and became a caucus used for the sole purpose of the political advancement of a few big-wigs. In fact, for the past few years the individuality of the Congress had been submerged in the shadow, and has been tacked on to the apron strings of its constituent child, the Lanka Maha Jana Sabha. The persistent reluctance of the bosses to reform and democratize the constitution of the Congress, their failure to widen its

1. *CDN*, 18 May 1932.

scope and make it more representative in character, the tenacity with which the caucus refuses to draw the minority communities within its fold, the repeated nomination by rotation of only those of the coterie as Presidents, and the re-election of amenable young men as Secretaries, are unmistakable indications of Congress' deterioration into a caucus, meant only to consolidate the pelf and power of the bosses. But when in the name of the country the Congress meets, as if in solemn and secret conclave, unheralded by any wide publicity of its intentions and with a handful of delegates promiscuously drawn, and passes a fatuous resolution, which an impartial observer with a reputation for political acumen, the Madras "Hindu," characterises appropriately enough as "Milk and Water Resolutions," on the reform off the Donoughmore Constitution, it is time the Congress was repudiated by the nation as jeopardising the best interests of the country.

One wonders whether the esteemed leaders of the Congress realise that in this attempt—futile and fatuous—at tinkering with the reform of the Donoughmore Constitution instead of advocating a root and branch jettisoning of the whole scheme, the country is not with them. Today, we behold the bewildering spectacle of the rank and file, both in and out of the Congress, being far ahead of the leaders in political aspirations and in formulating our next demands, and as to the nature of the political program to be mapped out for the future. There is an awakening in the unsophisticated man-in-the-street, inspired partly by the blatant betrayal of our State Councillors, but chiefly by the reaction of the bureaucracy in riding roughshod over popular feeling, that the Donoughmore Constitution should be uprooted wholesale, and our next demand should be for an untrammelled Dominion Status with complete control of the financial administration of the affairs of the country in our hands.

The mentality of Congressmen may be well exemplified by what the Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake said at Jaffna recently, "If by the boycott the Tamils achieved Swaraj, it is a credit to the Ceylonese. If by c

the Donoughmore scheme, we in the South achieved Swaraj, it is also a credit to the Ceylonese." What perverse logic and what political chicanery? The ministerial salary, the triumphant island-wide tours, unending processions and garlands galore are for him and his henchmen, but the boycott, its concomitant political isolation, loss of ministerial career and Council seats and salary, and all attendant privation and sufferings are to the Tamils! But when victory is won the spoils will be equally divided! Is this, Sir, what in medical parlance is termed "mental fossilisation" and one wonders whether it is symptomatic of the cult of the present-day Congress.

Mr. Senanayake, in supporting the resolution on Saturday, repeated the same tortuous argument when he said that he wondered why people blamed and criticised them. If they did not agree with their policy, their critics were at liberty to attain "nirvana" independent of them. Mr. Senanayake obviously forgets that nobody minds his own degradation but when he attempts the role of the Pied Piper of Hamelin to the nation and tempts us to follow him gaily to the doom, then we have a right to repudiate his effort to indoctrinate his sinister gospel to others. If Congress is serious about winning freedom for this ancient land and lifting this country to the status of a self-governing nation, they must abandon their present policy of opportunism, vacillation, and sycophancy and chalk out a program of action, militant and aggressive enough to compel the attention of Downing Street.

A. C. Chellarajah,
Wellawatte, May 17.

25. FOURTEENTH ANNUAL SESSIONS, 16-17 DECEMBER 1932

25 : A. Minutes of the Sessions

A summary of the proceedings of the fourteenth annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held on Friday, the 16th and 17th December, 1932, at the Tower Hall Maradana.

The Chairman of the Reception Committee, Dr. S. Muttiah, welcomed the delegates and called upon Mr. G. C. S. Corea, the new President, to occupy the chair. The President then delivered his presidential address.

Mr. R. S. S. Gunewardene then moved the following resolution :—

In view of the fact that it has not yet been possible completely to organise Congress under the New Constitution, this meeting authorises the transaction of business under the old Constitution till such time as the organisation under the new rules is completed.

Mr. W. F. B. Perera seconded. Carried unanimously.

Mr. A. W. H. Abeyesundere proposed the following resolution :—

That the Ceylon National Congress decides to participate in the National Committee in all such matters as are not opposed to Congress principles, provided that in any other matter the Congress delegates shall not be bound by a decision of the National Committee until and unless such decision has been approved by the Congress Executive.

Mr. Robert Gunawardana seconded.

At this stage Congress adjourned till 8.30 a.m. the next day.

The delegates were entertained to tea by Dr. Muttiah and a group photograph was taken.

When the delegates re-assembled the discussion was resumed on the resolution seeking approval of Congress participation in the National Committee. After further discussion of the resolution it was put to the meeting and lost by 36 votes to 17.

Mr. F. A. Obeyesekere proposed the following resolution :—

In pursuance of the declared policy of Congress to obtain full self-government for this country all steps necessary (including the immediate introduction of a Bill in the State Council) be taken to give effect to the terms of the resolution passed at the special sessions of the Congress held on the 14th of May, 1932.

Mr. W. A. de Silva seconded. Carried unanimously.

Mr. George E. de Silva moved the following resolution :—

In view of the serious burden under which the country is suffering as a result of the unreasonable proportion of the country's revenue now spent on establishment charges, this Congress is of opinion that immediate steps be taken to effect adequate retrenchment in such expenditure and that the Executive Committee should consider the report of the Pereira Commission and submit concrete proposals for action in the State Council.

Mr. N. de Alwis seconded. Carried unanimously.

Mr. M. Kanapathipillai moved the following resolution :—

This Congress calls upon Government to appoint a commission without delay to investigate and report upon the present state of existing industries, other than agricultural, and upon the possibility of starting new industries.

Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa seconded. Carried unanimously.

The following nominations to the Executive Committee of the Congress were then placed before the meeting and approved : [The list is printed elsewhere under item 3 : C above].

The President after thanking the delegates for their presence and the interest they had taken in the discussions declared the sessions closed.

A. W. H. Abeyesundere,
Jt. Hony. Sec.
C. N. C.
4. 1. 33.

25 : B. Draft Report on the Sessions[1]

An animated discussion on the propriety of participating in the deliberations of the National Committee took place[2] at the 14th annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held at the Tower Hall on the 16th December, 1932. About one hundred delegates were present.

Dr. S. Muttiah's Address

Proceedings began with an address by the Chairman of the Reception Committee, Dr. S. Muttiah.

Dr. Muttiah, in welcoming the delegates, said that the political horizon, as well as the economic outlook of the country, were fraught with many difficulties, and they were passing through a crisis to deal with which they, as representatives of the people, would be blessed with sufficient fortitude and willingness to undergo the necessary sacrifices, so that they could solve not only the vital questions but also look forward to further emancipation and the enjoyment of what had been decided as the ultimate goal of Congress activities, viz., the attainment of Full Responsible Government.

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1. *Available as a manuscript (C.N.A., 60/91) with the following headlines:*

Congress in Session
An Unfinished Debate
Executive Criticised
Meaning asked of Dominion Status.

The report was published in the same form with the same headlines in the CDN, 17 December 1932.

2. *The preceding phrase has been deleted in the draft, but appeared in the report published in the CDN.*

Visit of Under-Secretary

After referring to the Reform motions passed by the State Council, he said that it was opportune that they were to be favoured with a visit by the Permanent Under-Secretary of State for the Colonies in a few weeks' time. He had no doubt that, along with other public bodies, the Ceylon National Congress would take the opportunity of presenting their views and impressing on the Under-Secretary of State the imperative necessity there was for the immediate reform of the Constitution, and that the country was ready not merely to mouth platform platitudes but also to undergo such sacrifices and have recourse to such practical action as might be necessary for the enforcement of the rights of the people for the attainment of Full Responsible Government in the near future.

Dr. Muttiah then touched upon the resolutions on the agenda.

In welcoming their new President and inviting him to occupy the chair he wished to say that like his immediate predecessor in office he bore a name that was honoured throughout the length and breadth of this country. Mr. G. C. S. Corea's career in the political field had been one of successful service and unstinting devotion to the country's cause for several years. His past achievements they regarded as an earnest [indication] of what he was capable of fulfilling in the future.

G. C. S. Corea's Presidential Address

Mr. G. C. S. Corea then occupied the chair and delivered his presidential address.

He began by assuring the meeting that he would devote himself to the "very great task of jealously safeguarding all the principles on which Congress has been founded; of maintaining its traditions and of infusing into it "fresh life and vigour." He paid a tribute to the retiring President, Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, and proceeded to review the

political events of the recent past, leading up to the passage by the State Council of the series of Reform motions proposed by Mr. E. W. Perera.

First Resolution

Continuing, he said: "These amendments are intended to make self-government effectual and it is for us now to devise practical measures to give effect to them. In the first resolution placed before you is indicated the step which Congress proposes to take and if you approve of it arrangement will immediately be made to obtain legal sanction for these amendments by the introduction of a Bill in the State Council.

The step we propose to take is both legal and constitutional. A representative legislature such as the State Council has the undoubted right to amend its Constitution and we propose to act in pursuance of that right. Our case is both strong and reasonable and I have not the slightest doubt that in the light of recent events our demands will be granted. The words of the Donoughmore Commission report are illuminating: 'It would be the height of timidity as of inconsistency to recommend a transfer of responsibility while devising means to render that transfer not fully effective.' I will adopt these words and ask how in the light of that opinion the safeguards could be reasonably justified. The hindrances which the Donoughmore Commissioner pointed out to [*sic*] the grant of Full Responsible Government do not now exist."

Lesson of the Elections

He then reviewed the results of the general election and said: "If only members of the minority communities with [*sic*] the confidence of the electors by public service, if they will get into touch with the masses they will see that the average voter is not swayed by consideration of caste, creed or race. A good man and true who has identified himself with the people will always have a very fair chance of being elected."

State Council and Minorities

"An impartial observer will also bear witness to the fact that the State Council has done nothing to raise the suspicion of unfair treatment of minorities. On the other hand, unpresented interests have always found champions in Council. For instance, although Jaffna has by its own choice no representation, the interests of that area have been watched with great concern and the public testimony to that borne by one of the leading Tamil men of Ceylon recently confirms my statement. In other respects too, the record of the State Council amply proves that nothing has been done to alienate the confidence of any interest or community.

The objections to Full Responsible Government have disappeared and in the light of the unanimous demand that now exists in the country our case for a revision of the Constitution is unanswerable.

The Last Resort

But there are some even amongst us who are not satisfied with this resolution alone. They have strongly urged the necessity for an indication by Congress of what its attitude will be if the amendments we ask for are not allowed. They ask that another resolution should be passed, that in the latter event a campaign of boycott, non-co-operation and civil disobedience should be inaugurated. Now I must state that I am not opposed to boycott and non-co-operation at the proper time. They are weapons sacred to small nations but they must be kept in reserve to be used only as a last resort. We cannot therefore begin with non-co-operation.

If the occasion arises during my tenure of office, I can assure you that you will not find me wanting nor lagging behind. Personally, I dislike empty threats and I dislike to state [*sic*] a case which is strong and reasonable in itself and accompanying it by flouring [*sic*] a threat of the dire results of a refusal. Such a threat will only weaken our case.

I want you to take the sensible and practical step we indicate of passing an amending Bill ourselves. If that is vetoed, then will be the time for those who are now so anxious to non-co-operate to come forward.

Is Country Ready for Boycott

But if there are those who want to do so there is not much time to be lost. Before they decide they must look at facts. Is the country ready for Non-Co-operation on an effective scale ? Has anything been done to create the necessary machinery ? Are there funds available ? I would like to say that before making empty threats, which at the present moment we are unable to carry out, let us take the practical course indicated by us in the first resolution and simultaneously begin an organisation which will help to make the country ready for non-co-operation, if it becomes necessary. It is for these reasons that the Executive Committee decided not to place on the agenda a resolution regarding boycott and non-co-operation."

The Public Service

Referring to the Public Service, he said, "I am sure that during the last eighteen months there has been very cordial relations between the members of the State Council and Heads of Departments. The Ministers have acted in the closest Co-operation with Heads of Departments under them."

"Just as interference and severe criticism was the logical outcome of the last Constitution, Co-operation and close association is the result of the present Constitution. The responsibility placed on the whole Council makes it incumbent on it to secure a contented and efficient Public Service and even the State Councillors cannot be guilty of so gross an absurdity as to ignore that. Can it be honestly and reasonably contended that the State Council as a whole will act unreasonably in the matter of the salaries and allowances of the Public Service ? If it can be charged with

the government of the country it is futile to suggest that it cannot deal honourably and justly with the officers of the government.

By a control of the Public Service we mean the right to control the policy which affects them. We do not want disciplinary control, we do not want the right of individual appointments. We should leave all that to the Public Service Commission and to Heads of Department."

Governor's Powers

"Now in adopting this course of keeping the Public Services at arms length from the State Council, the Commissioners have themselves unwittingly imported a source of serious and constant friction. Far from achieving the end they had in view it has really resulted in placing the Governor in a most unenviable position and has led to much unpleasantness. That this is so is proved from the recent acts of certification which, in most cases, arose over questions relating to the Public Service. The Governor was charged with the protection of the Public Service and acted in [*sic*] that legal right which he possessed.

Of course it is imposible to absolve His Excellency the Governor of all blame. It was his duty to exercise that right judiciously after taking into consideration all the circumstances of the case. Our complaint is that although he had the right he misused that right in these acts of certification. What guarantee is there then that if that right remains it will not be repeatedly used? The only reasonable course to adopt is to remove that right. We are also suggesting the removal of the reserve powers of the Governor, which, like the power of the Governor to legislate independently of the Council and the right of certification, are a negation of Responsible Government."

Assurance to Minority

Continuing, he dealt with communal representation, and said, "It is to be hoped that those who seek to resuscitate this evil, which has been so decently and effectively buried by

the Donoughmore Commissioners, will pause to consider and weigh their weighty pronouncement. We can assure the minority communities that there is no desire on our part to efface them from the political sphere. Their presence in the Council of State will be a tower of strength for they count amongst their communities some of the ablest and best men of the country. As I said before they can find support in any general electorate if only they will try to win the confidence of the people. It is also to be hoped that when the Order-in-Council is amended the State Council will be enlarged. In the re-distribution of seats which will follow, there will be ample opportunity for members of minority communities to find electorates whose confidence they will be able to win. I appeal to all the minority communities to give up all suspicion and to cast off all fear and merge themselves in the general community of Ceylonese. We are today at a critical period of our political development and it is our duty to stand together to win for our country its birthright. United we stand, divided we fall.

What do the minorities hope to gain by standing out? What do they gain by obtaining a communal seat here and another there? How can they thereby protect their interests and what interests apart from the general interests of the country do they hope to safeguard? If not for the welfare of the country, at any rate prudence alone, should dictate to them that by standing aloof, they damage not only their interests but those of the country at large."

Proceeding to deal with the other resolutions on the agenda, Mr. Corea said that by the second resolution they were seeking approval for their participation in the National Committee.

The third resolution dealt with the Congress constitution. Last December the Congress adopted a new constitution but it had not been possible completely to reorganise Congress and the resolution sought formal sanction to carry on their activities under the old constitution until such time

as the new organisation was complete. It would be his endeavour, he added, to map out a program to completely reorganise Congress during the coming year.

The fourth resolution dealt with the question of retrenchment particularly in relation to the heavy establishment charges, and in the last resolution the question of the industrial development of the country was raised. It was thought desirable that a commission should be appointed to exhaustively examine the state of existing industries, their success and failure and the scope for new industries. The report of the commission, it was hoped, would be very useful to those who are engaged in small industries and would gradually assist in establishing manufacturing industries.

While dealing with the work of the different Ministries, he said that there are two matters in which greater interest than is now evinced was urgently called for. These are the Technical Schools and the University.

In conclusion he said: "The financial depression which has affected the whole world affected us also very seriously. The revenue of the country has shrunk considerably and is daily showing signs of further shrinkage. Large numbers of people are unemployed, and perhaps as a result, crime is on the increase. Failure of the responsible authorities to give relief to debtors has led to a large number of forced sales which have resulted in changing them from respectable land-owners who formed the backbone of the country into wandering vagabonds. These are therefore critical days and every man and woman in the country will have to strain every nerve to tide over these difficulties. With courage and determination we can pull through."

The President then announced that Sir D. B. Jayatilaka who was to have been present on that occasion was indisposed and had sent a message to that effect. They regretted his absence very much.

First Resolution

Mr. R. S. S. Gunewardene proposed and Mr. W. F. B. Perera seconded that:

> In view of the fact that it has not yet been possible completely to organise Congress under the new Constitution this meeting authorises the transaction of business under the old Constitution till such time as the organisation under the new rules is completed.

In the course of the discussion that followed Mr. G. A. A. Gunatilaka said that last year when the new constitution of the Congress was proposed it was stated that they were taking a progressive step. It was one thing to pass a resolution and it was another thing to put it into action and he wondered what steps had been taken by their Executive Committee to put that resolution into operation.

Mr. Geo. E. de S lva said that Congress workers should not be kicked for some mistake they might have made. If every member of Congress put his shoulder to the wheel and worked for the promotion of Congress ideals there would be no need for them to blame one another. If those regulations could not have been brought into effect it was not only the Executive Committee but every one of them was to be blamed. After further discussion the resolution was adopted.

Relations with National Committee

Mr. A. W. H. Abeyesundere proposed and Mr. Robert Gunawardana seconded:

> That the Ceylon National Congress decides to participate in the National Committee in all such matters as are not opposed to Congress principles, provided that in any other matter the Congress delegates shall not be bound by a decision of the National Committee until and unless such decision has been approved by the Congress Executive.

Opposition

Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa, opposing the motion, said that the National Congress was in an enfeebled State and it was their duty to bring it back to vigour. The members of the Executive Committee instead of translating into action the resolution passed by Congress last year, had wasted their time and dissipated their energies in following an unexplained thing called "Dominion Status" and joined another rival political body in its pursuit. The National Committee was worrying themselves about safeguarding minorities, providing for special interests and the like, matters with which the Congress had nothing to do. Why should the Executive Committee of the National Congress burden themselves with other matters which are really not within their purview, instead of trying to consolidate the position of Congress ?

Mr. W. I. Lucas Fernando enquired whether any Congressman who had subscribed to the pact referred to by the last speaker was present in the hall.

The Chairman : "As far as I am aware there is no such person in the hall."

Ex-President's Place

Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike said that there was no harm in the National Congress participating in the National Committee. The idea originated with him. However, he asked those present to consider the matter very carefully before arriving at a decision.

Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya did not see the necessity of joining the National Committee or asking for the approval of the Congress. The Congress was the first political organisation in Ceylon which counted members from all communities who were then united. Instead of the Congress joining the Liberal League's National Committee, why should the other political bodies not join the National Congress and unite in forming a National Committee ?

Adjournment

At this stage Congress adjourned till 8.30 a.m. on the 7th. The delegates were entertained to tea by Dr. Muttiah, Chairman of the Reception Committee, and a group photograph was taken after which the meeting broke up

The Second Day's Proceedings[1]

The resolution asking approval of Congress participation in the National Committee was defeated by a majority on Saturday morning at the resumed annual session of the National Congress, at the Tower Hall, under the Chairmanship of Mr. G. C. S. Corea (President).

When the delegates re-assembled the discussion was resumed on the following resolution, which had been introduced the previous day:

> That the Ceylon National Congress decides to participate in the National Committee in all such matters as are not opposed to Congress principles, provided that in any other matter the Congress delegates shall not be bound by a decision of the National Committee until and unless such decision has been approved by the Congress Executive.

Replying to a point raised, the Chairman explained that the National Committee was formed since their last annual sessions. The Congress Executive had decided on their participation in the National Committee, but it was now left for them in full session to refuse approval of the decision of the Congress Executive.

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1. Derived from a handwritten manuscript with the following captions provided :—

Congress to Stand Aloof
Exit from National Committee

This report appeared in the same form and under the same headlines in the CDN, 10 December 1932. A separate newspaper report appeared in the *CDN* of the same date regarding the main issue of the day, viz., Congress participation in the National Committee. See *infra*, pp. 1092-93.

Blank Cheque View

Mr. John Perera opposed the resolution.

Mr. F. A. Obeyesekere, also opposing, said that the idea of a National Committee, through which they should put forward their National demand with a united front, originated with their last President, Mr. Bandaranaike. But before they could put that idea into effect others had appropriated the idea and brought about the National Committee. Who was its President! Who was its Secretary ? he asked. Was Congress adequately represented on that Committee ? When they looked at the composition of the National Committee they could see that an organisation called the Liberal League which had sprung up on the day before yesterday had the commanding say in it.

According to the resolution the Congress participation in the National Committee was to be only in those matters which were not opposed to Congress principles. But how were the individuals on that Committee to judge what went against the Congress principles and what did not! He was afraid they were proposing to put their signature on a blank cheque. Attempts had been made, he said, to make a catspaw of Congress, but they were not going to submit to it.

Mr. S. P. A. de Silva urged that the National Committee had brought together the various organisations to work for one common goal and it was their duty to give them every support.

Mr. George E. de Silva, Mr. W. F. F. Perera and two other speakers also opposed the resolution.

National Committee's Object

Mr. W. A. de Silva deplored the trend of the discussion. If they examined the object of the National Committee carefully they would find that the various organisations in

the country had joined hands and formed what was called a National Committee in order to work unitedly for the realisation of the National object. The Congress, he said, would be a real national organisation only if it strived to work in unison with everybody, ridding themselves of mutual differences and antagonisms.

After further discussion of the resolution, the Chairman explained, before putting it to the meeting, that the existence of the National Committee meant that today, at least upon the matter, there was complete unanimity in the country, that was, on their political aim. When they made their representations on that question with a united front they certainly must receive due consideration.

The resolution was put to the meeting and lost by 36 votes to 17.

The following resolutions were also [*sic*] carried :—

> In pursuance of the declared policy of Congress to obtain full self-government for this country all steps necessary (including the immediate introduction of a Bill in the State Council) be taken to give effect to the terms of the resolution passed at the special sessions of the Congress held on the 14th of May, 1932.
>
> In view of the serious burden under which the country is suffering as a result of the unreasonable proportion of the country's revenue now spent on establishment charges, this Congress is of opinion that immediate steps be taken to effect adequate retrenchment in such expenditure and that the Executive Committee should consider the report of the Pereira Commission and submit concrete proposals for action in the State Council.

The nominations to the Executive Committee of the Congress were then placed before the meeting and approved.

Another News Item on the Second Day's Proceedings[1]

In view of a resolution passed at Saturday's annual session of the Congress, there has been some speculation in regard to the participation of the Congress in the future activities of the National Committee.

The resolution, which was rejected by 36 votes against 17, stated: "That . . . . . approved by the Congress Executive."[2]

The President (Mr. G. C. S. Corea) explained at the meeting that the Congress Executive had decided on participation in the National Committee, but it was left to the full session of the Congress to approve the step or not. *Thirty political associations are represented on the National* Committee of which the National Congress is one. In *addition to its six nominees there are other members of the* Congress on the Committee who find a place in it in their individual capacities as public men.

Position of Congress Members

It is learned that the members of the Congress who are also members of the National Committee take the view that the rejection of the resolution does not preclude them from continuing as members of the National Committee. All that it implies is that the Congress does not participate officially in its deliberations. The Congress will not accordingly endorse any proposals which the National Committee may ultimately decide upon.

One difficulty that arises in any case is with regard to the position of the six special nominees of the Congress on the National Committee. These members will have to cease to

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1. This appeared in the *CDN*, 19 December, 1932, under the headlines: "Congress Breakaway" and "National Committee's Future." What is surprising is the fact that this item, including as it does a journalistic interview with Francis de Zoysa who was *not* a member of the Congress, should appear in the Congress files written in the same hand as that which drafted the report on the sessions. In fact, it is an integral part of the foolscap booklet which contains these reports.

2. See *supra*. p. 1089 for resolution.

be nominees of the Congress and continue their membership of the National Committee in their private capacity or withdraw from the Committee altogether.

Committee not Informed

Mr. Francis de Zoysa, KC, Chairman of the National Committee, said to a "Daily News" representative yesterday that the National Committee had not yet been officially informed of any action that the Congress proposed to take following the decision on the resolution.

The memorandum drawn up by the Committee had the approval of the Congress members as well as others. Even if any Congress members decide to withdraw from the National Committee, the latter will continue its work.

It is understood that the position will be further clarified at a meeting of the Executive of the National Committee expected to take place this week.[1]

25: C. Appendix to the Thirteenth Annual Sessions

(1) Ceylon Daily News Editorial, 19 December 1932: "The Hand of Esau"

The decision of the Ceylon National Congress to secede from participation in the National Committee is another revelation of the unworthy motives that have made the Congress a discredited organisation. Many people experienced considerable surprise when the Executive Committee of the Congress responded favourably to the invitation to co-operate in the attainment of the desired goal. It seemed at first too good to be true. The main characteristic displayed by the remnant of the once powerful Congress is an obsession that it monopolises the political wisdom of

1. Also see the newspaper report on a public meeting re constitutional reform held on the 31st October, 1933. [*infra*, item 87].

the country and that nobody else had any right to poach on preserves that it considered exclusive to it. In its best days the leaders among Congressmen did not delude themselves with exaggerated notions of their own importance. It is, however, inevitable that a clique whose members are steadily dwindling should feed on its own feverish imagination. As a consequence of this diet, the Congress as it now is has never welcomed the existence of other organisations, however well-intentioned and whatever the integrity of the men who founded them. The petty jealousy that poisons public life induced in the Congress a jaundiced outlook, and it was an open secret that spite rather than amity was the basic ingredient of the feelings between the Congress and other organisations of a like character. But for one brief spell the better impulses of the Congress were quickened when it agreed not to allow the personal factor to obstruct its co-operation for the national good. That was the decision of its Executive Committee.

On second thoughts the decision has now been revoked, and the figures of the voting show that it was not a case of a handful of executive committee men pledging the goodwill of the Congress when the Congress as a whole was not agreeable to any such undertaking. The resolution abandoning participation in the National Committee was passed on Saturday by 36 votes to 17. The Executive Committee itself is more numerous than the total votes recorded. Incidentally the fallacy of the Congress claim to speak on behalf of any large section of the public is demonstrated by the fact that its annual sessions should attract so meagre a group of delegates. The decision simply means that the Congress agreed to sit on the National Committee in the belief that it could dominate it and convert it into an instrument to implement the personal ambitions of certain of its most resourceful members. Failing to do so, it tried its best, as recent proceedings of the National Committee testify, to wreck the Committee from within. It could not bear to see the centre of the

stage occupied by anybody but Congress, and in its impatience it has now broken away on the flimsiest pretexts. The grievance seems to be that the National Committee has no office-bearers chosen from the Congress. Is that what the present-day leaders of the Congress hanker after? If so, could pettiness go further?

The " Daily News " has never exhibited a blind and childlike faith in the National Committee. We were the first to utter the warning that the communal tinge to its discussions would develop a fatal canker, and the first also to regret that a body which might have symbolised not merely unity but the capacity for mutual sacrifices was degenerating into a debating society whose discussions helped little to achieve its original ideals. But with all its shortcomings the National Committee represented something never before realised. All these years it had been impossible to bring the various groups together for an amicable agreement to co-operate unitedly in working for the country's constitutional advancement. To have actually brought them on to one platform was a great deal gained. The development could have been utilised with very great benefit to the country if all sides thought in unqualified terms of the national welfare. Events prove that this was too much to require of the ambitions of Congressmen concerned not with national policy but with their personal ends. They have, therefore, decided to take a step that will effectively torpedo the Committee, for now that Congress will not officially participate individual Congressmen who continue to sit on it will represent nobody but their private selves. It is up to the National Committee to rise above its own limitations and show that the withdrawal of the laodiceans of the national cause is but a spur for it to pursue a broadminded program to finality. That would be an answer to the backsliders.

26. FIFTEENTH ANNUAL SESSIONS, 23 DECEMBER 1933

26 : A. Minutes of the Sessions

A summary of the proceedings of the fifteenth annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held on Saturday the 23rd December 1933 at the Ananda College Hall, Colombo.

Proceedings began with a vote of condolence on the death of Sir Graeme Thomson moved by Mr. L. W. A. de Soysa, Chairman of the Reception Committee. After the vote was passed, Mr. de Soysa welcomed the delegates and invited Mr. G. K. W. Perera, the new President, to occupy the chair. The President then delivered his Presidential Address, in the course of which he offered a hearty welcome on behalf of the Ceylon National Congress to the new Governor Sir Edward Stubbs.

Mr. J. R. Pieris then moved the following resolution :

> The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that Constitutional Reform is urgently necessary and supports the decision of the State Council on the Reform proposals of the Ministers.

Mr. Wilfred Gunesekera seconded.

At this stage Congress adjourned for lunch. When Congress resumed after the lunch interval, Messrs. R. S. S. Gunewardene and A. W. H. Abeyesundere supported the resolution which was put to the meeting and carried.

Mr. L. W. A. de Soysa proposed the following resolution :

> The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that the small agriculturist and industrialist should be given the full benefit of the national financial resources by the grant of subsidies and credit facilities.

Revd. W. M. P. Jayatunga seconded. The Hon. D. S. Senanayake supported. Carried unanimously.

Mr. E. Y. D. Abeygunawardena proposed the following resolution:

The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that administration of land in the provinces should be entrusted to Provincial Land Authorities which should include representatives of the people.

Mr. G. G. Punchihewa seconded. Carried unanimously.

There was an adjournment for tea at this stage. After the interval Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa moved the following resolution:

The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion (a) that the present method of demarcating electorates on a population basis should be continued; (b) that the non-Ceylonese who seek registration as voters on the ground of domicile should support their claims by affidavit.

Mr. D. Amaratunga seconded. Mr. B. Don Elaris supported. Carried unanimously.

The following nominations to the Executive Committee of the Congress were then placed before the meeting and approved: [the list of members is presented on pp. 36-38].

The President, after thanking the delegates for their presence and the interest they had taken in the discussions, declared the sessions closed.

26: B. Draft Report on the Session

The fifteenth annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress was held at Ananda College on Saturday the 23rd. Proceedings began with a vote of condolence on the death

1. From C.N.A., 60/92. This handwritten draft has the following captions:
Soviet Land Policy as the Ideal
Annual Session of the Ceylon National Congress
Election of Ministers: President Stands by Previous Decision.

of Sir Graeme Thomson moved by Mr. W. A. B. Soysa, Chairman of the Reception Committee. After the vote was passed, Mr. de Soysa welcomed the delegates and invited Mr. G. K. W. Perera, the President-elect, to occupy the chair.

G. K. W. Perera's Presidential Address

In the course of his address, he said: "I have great pleasure in offering Sir Edward Stubbs, our new Governor, a most hearty welcome to our shores. It is but fitting that we, the largest party in the Island, admitted on all hands to be fully representative of all the majorities in the country should have the first opportunity of addressing words of welcome to the British representative. Sir Edward Stubbs comes with a great reputation as an able administrator, a reputation for which he had laid the first foundation in this very Island. As a man of education and great culture, we firmly believe that under his supervision this experimental Constitution of ours will receive such amendment as we conceive necessary in order to develop the country on the lines the people of this country consider most advantageous to themselves. For that we require his full sympathy and the utmost consideration. At the end of his period of office he may then have the proud privilege of having assisted in a material degree the regeneration of a people whose past history justifies the expectation of future greatness. We wish Sir Edward Stubbs a happy and useful period of service to his country and our own."

*Continuing, Mr. Perera said what stood out most promi*nently in the political situation today was the fact that all political parties, groups, communities and combinations with one voice called for a progressive step in constitutional reform. Apart from the disagreement between constitutional students as to the workability or otherwise of the Committee system of Government, it might be said that

1. This must be an error. According to the minutes it was L. W. A. de Soysa.

there was perfect unanimity in the country in the demand for political freedom. The pitiful gesture made by a group calling themselves the Minorities, which met recently in Colombo, was relieved by a touch of comedy when the leader under whose patronage the meeting was called publicly disowned them.

Proceeding to survey the principal happenings of the year, Mr. Perera touched on Imperial Preference, the report of the Salaries and Cadres Commission, tea control and the Reforms Memoranda of the Board of Ministres. Regarding preference he said:

"We have already been more than generous in the reciprocal preferences allowed to British products. It is perhaps not too late yet for England to make the necessary gesture if it is still anxious for our patronage of British cotton goods, by requiring the consumers of Madagascar plumbago to patronise the Ceylon article. It is no good attempting to bluff us with the tea preference."

Salaries Issue

The Select Committee appointed to report on the recommendation of the Salaries and Cadres Commission, he said, had been sitting for some months, and from the indications it has given, the conclusion was inevitable that it was engaged in undoing all the good work done by the Commission. It was quite clear that while they accepted the reduced salaries for new entrants as quite justifiable in the case of the lower rungs of the services, they definitely held that the salaries fixed by the Commission for the higher grades of the services are altogether inadequate.

Reforms Memoranda

The most noteworthy happening during the year, he continued, was the presentation of the Reforms Memoranda by the Board of Ministers.

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Regarding the second of their proposals, namely the strengthening of the position of the Board of Ministers by enabling them to institute and carry out their financial policies, he said :

"As I have observed before there is no objection to strengthening the position of the Board of Ministers without at the same time weakening the position of the Executive Committees. During the time the new Constitution has been working there has been no real trial of their financial genius, as the drop in revenue which might have constituted a great menace synchronised with the agitation for retrenchment in all departments. We are not without respect for the firmness with which the Board tackled the deficit budget. The presence of Ministers belonging to a party whose one principle was that there shall be no income tax must have brought out the best that was in our own Ministers to master the situation. The weakness of the composition of a Board would appear when unpleasant duties such as the imposition of additional taxes becomes necessary. A second division as in the case of the income tax would most inevitably create such a crisis as to upset the present composition of the Board. The next decision of the majority of the Ministers would therefore appear to be reasonable."

Claims of Minorities

As to the change desired in the method of electing Ministers, he said, the present method of selecting Ministers was intended to permit the inclusion of minorities on the Board. The advantages of such an inclusion are more apparent than real. [That] the minorities should have a chance of being heard is an axiom, but it is not so obvious that they should have representation on the Board. If such representation is asked for merely as an honour, as appears to be the case, then I fear the country will not again agree to the presence of decorative Ministers under the guise of responsible Ministers in this most important of all communities.

"How the constitution provides for the claims of minorities is by their presence in Executive Committees where they would have a definite say in the policy of departments. Even one member can wield influence in a small Committee. But the argument as regards minorities is not the influence they are able to gain by reason of their presence, but their ability to have their point of view heard and considered. It was never intended that they should be in a position to barter their votes for favours. This inclination is apparent to some extent in our Committee now. We find members always on the side of the heads of departments not because he [sic ?] agrees with them, but for the reason they actually give that if the head of the department wants it, he knows best. Undoubtedly at the back of this member's mind is the expectation that the community he represents will receive reciprocal favours from that head of the department. It is for this reason that the method suggested by the minority of the Ministers for the composition of the Board does not appeal to me. It is not desirable in the absence of a party system to permit anybody, however fair or honest he may be, to be clothed with authority sufficient to enable him by show of a patronage and favour to get sufficient votes to command a majority. The spirit of bargaining should not be permitted to enter our Councils.

I am in favour of following the decision of Congress at a previous sessions that all the Ministers should be elected by the whole Council. After election the Ministers shall choose their Chairman, and allocate the Ministers to the Committees. At the next meeting of Council the Committees will be elected and the members when they choose their Committees will know which Minister they will be serving under."

With regard to the reconstruction of the Public Service Commission, he expressed complete agreement with the Ministers in their objection to the present composition of the Commission.

With regard to the personnel of the Commission he was altogether opposed to the picking out of men whose best years have already been spent. A man retired from service

when he could no longer serve was certainly not that type who could be expected to wade through records and qualifications of public servants. As in other countries picked men who were still in the prime of life should be chosen, and a condition attached that they should not, after the completion of their term of service in the Commission, accept service themselves for ten years after.

On the subject of the Governor's Powers, Mr. Perera said: "Our Constitution has been framed to meet the requirements of a transitional stage and one in no sense intended to be a completed and finished structure. The present suggestions are to take the Constitution one stage beyond in its transition, and I would suggest as a first step an increase in the number of members representing territorial electorates. The Donoughmore Commission intended that the Executive Committees should be larger, and Sir Anton Bertram was of opinion the Committees would function more efficiently if they had been larger. In view of the suggestion that the Officers of State should be replaced by Executive Committees and Ministers, it is absolutely necessary that the strength of the Council be increased."

The following are further extracts from the presidential address: "It has become quite a pleasantry with some disappointed persons to poke fun at the conduct of the Councillors, either in relation to appointments for which they have been partly responsible or in relation to legislation in which they took the less popular view, that they might have been subject to persuasion of an illicit and illegal character. This kind of thinking is rather natural to mentalities of the lower calibre which are not given to consider points of view other than their own. I was rather surprised to find this attitude maintained with vigour by professors of the University whose pet recommendations have apparently been summarily relegated to the waste paper basket. It must be possible for professors to know that choice of suitable candidates may be made from different standpoints according to the dictates of Government policy.

They must also appreciate the fact that insinuations they make against Councillors may with equal justice be made by Councillors against the professors.

The public ought to show greater appreciation of the fact that Members of the Council are worked harder probably than those of any other legislative assembly in the world.

Local Government

One of the most progressive steps recommended by the Donoughmore Commission has been neglected owing to the want of vision on the part of the Commissioner for Local Government. The progressive realisation of responsible Government should commence in the provinces. The Donoughmore Commissioner made a specific recommendation for the constitution of Provincial Councils. The Commissioner of Local Government reported against it on the ground of expense, a phrase borrowed from Sir Herbert Stanley. If the Executive Committee on Local Administration appreciated how quickly good results would follow the establishment of a Provincial Council, the experiment would have been tried long ago. I do not consider the establishment of a few Urban Councils would mean the abolition of the Provincial and District Kachcheries and Provincial Council offices would take their place; the local autocrats would cease to be autocrats, and have committees attached to them whose dictation of policy they would have to follow, subject of course to the supervision of the Executive Committee of Local Administration. In my opinion the cost of administration would be reduced rather than increased, for the several offices now functioning in separate buildings would be brought under one supervision and roof, and the expenditure relieved by a certain amount of local revenue.

My proposal to import and export from abroad received no support from the Committee for reasons best known to themselves, as their own ability to do what was necessary was not one of the reasons. I sought to obtain the assistance of the Annual Conference of Government Agents to formulate a scheme and for this purpose offered to put

up for the criticism of the conference a scheme prepared by me. Any Committee interested in Local Administration would have evinced at least a curiosity to see such a scheme, however crude it may be. The Committee was not even curious.

Language of Government

One of the greatest handicaps the people suffer from is the language of Government. It is most absurd for us to fight for rights on behalf of the large majority who compose the agricultural population of this country, when we deny ourselves the elementary right of conducting our government in the peoples' languages. The most educated oriental scholar has to seek the assistance of a way-side petition drawer in order to communicate with the smallest Government official. Our people are tried for their liberty in a language foreign to them. Where we have the liberty to choose our own language we must unreasonably prefer to carry on in English. The State Council could not find the necessary majority to adopt a standing order permitting Members to seek the permission of Council to speak on an occasion in Sinhalese or Tamil, and the opposition came from the native members. We are told that the country took no interest in politics to judge from the attendance in the gallery during momentous debates. The galleries are empty because the people do not find it even amusing to listen to the wisdom uttered in a language they do not understand. My feeling is that if our politicians are compelled to speak in the language of the country they would, many of them, lose the prestige they now possess, and if the Sinhalese or Tamil educated man is eligible to come into Council, our Councils would be full of people of the highest education and culture who are ignorant of the English language. If our courts and offices are made open to those educated in the native languages, the progress of this country would be quicker beyond the dreams of many of us." ...

Mr. Perera then proceeded to comment on the resolutions of the agenda.

In conclusion he congratulated on behalf of the Congress Mr. G. C. S. Corea, the retiring President, on a very successful year of work.

The Resolutions[1]

[The resolutions 1, 2, 3 and 4 on the agenda][2] were unanimously adopted.

Mr. D. S. Senanayake, speaking on the third resolution, said that he was glad that there were a number of officers who adopted a most sympathetic attitude towards the administration of land in provinces He did not dispute the fact that there were at the same time officers who acted unsympathetically as was done under the old order of things. It was necessary to have a central authority for the administration of land with a due regard to the public interests and the claims of the people, but for such authority to share the responsibilities of administrative control over lands with others was a difficult matter in practice.

Soviet Example

Mr. W. A. de Silva said that in the past land policy had been of a "diseased" character but a re-orientation of that policy had been effected to some extent recently. It was nothing but their sheer duty to give the land back to the people. Until it was realised that the land of the country should not be allowed to be exploited for individual gain but utilised for the general welfare of the community at large, there would be danger ahead. Every man must be conceded his right to the land, but not beyond a sufficient extent to satisfy his own requirements. That is the policy which was adopted by the Soviet Government in Russia.

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1. In the draft manuscript this section precedes the report on the presidential address. We have amended the report to present the proceedings in their actual sequence.

2. See Minutes of the Sessions, *supra*, pp. 1096-97.

27. SIXTEENTH ANNUAL SESSIONS, 15 December 1934

27 : A. Agenda : Resolutions[1]

Ananda College Hall, Colombo. 10 a.m.

1. The present Constitution having been given a fair trial the Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that it requires amendment in the following respects :

(*a*) The State Council to have the complete control of the finances of the country.

(*b*) The removal of the Officers of State and the substitution in their place of Ministers responsible to the Council.

(*c*) The appointment of a non-official Public Service Commission.

(*d*) A sufficient limitation of the reserve powers of the Governor,

and calls upon all its members to pledge themselves to work for the immediate achievement of this object.

2. The Ceylon National Congress approves of the following scheme for the nomination of candidates at the forthcoming State Council Elections :—

(*a*) *A Nomination Board.*—The Congress shall, at its annual sessions appoint a Nomination Board consisting of five members.

(*b*) *Functions of the Board.*—(i) To examine the qualifications of applicants for adoption as Congress candidates and to determine their fitness in consultation with local associations affiliated to Congress. (ii) To determine which, if any, candidates should be adopted by Congress with reference to any particular constituency.

1. From . N. A., 60/46.

(*c*) *Qualifications of Candidates.*—(i) Every candidate shall have been, for a period of not less than six months immediately preceding his application, a member of the Congress Executive Committee or of an association affiliated to Congress. (ii) Every candidate shall subscribe to the Congress Creed and undertake to abide by the decisions of Congress.

(*d*) *Duties of Congress towards Candidates.*—(i) To establish election offices in such areas as the Executive Committee may consider necessary (ii) To appoint sub-committees for arranging election meetings and for preparing general election literature suitable for each constituency. (iii) To arrange for Congress Leaders to visit constituencies which are contested by Congress candidates. (iv) To meet all legitimate demands which may be made by a candidate for the purpose of advancing his candidature.

(*e*) The decisions of the Nomination Board in all matters referred to them shall be final and binding on Congress.

3. The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that instead of the present method of registering as voters only those who apply for registration, the Government should itself undertake the registration of all qualified voters.

4. The Executive Committee of the Ceylon National Congress shall be authorised to collect contributions towards an Election Fund.

P. D. S. Jayasekera,
P. H. A. Silva,
Hony. Secretaries, C. N. C.

Colombo, *15.12.34.*

27 : B. MINUTES OF THE SESSIONS

A summary of the proceedings of the sixteenth annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held on Saturday the 15th December, 1934, at the Ananda College Hall, Colombo.

The Chairman of the Reception Committee, Mr. R. S. Tennekoon, welcomed the delegates and called upon Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, the new President, to occupy the chair. The President then delivered his Presidential address.

Mr. L. W. A. de Soysa then moved the following resolution :

The present Constitution having been given a fair trial the Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that it requires amendment in the following respects :—

(*a*) The State Council to have the complete control of the finances of the country,

(*b*) The removal of the Officers of State and the substitution in their place of Ministers responsible to the Council,

(*c*) The appointment of a non-official Public Services Commission,

(*d*) A sufficient limitation of the reserve powers of the Governor,

and calls upon all its members to pledge themselves to work for the immediate achievement of this object.

Mr. Victor C. Perera seconded. Mr. D. G. Weerasinghe spoke in support of the resolution, which, being put to the house, was carried unanimously.

The proceedings were then adjourned till 1.30 p.m. and the delegates and some of the visitors were entertained to lunch.

On resumption the following were elected members of the Executive Committee of the Congress on the motion of Mr. P. H. A. Silva, the Jt. Hony Secretary, seconded by Mr. A. W. H. Abeyesundere: [the list of members is presented on pp. 39-41].

Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya proposed the following resolution:

The Ceylon National Congress approves of the following scheme for the nomination of candidates at the forthcoming state Council Election:—

(a) *A Nomination Board.*—The Congress shall, at its annual sessions, appoint a Nomination Board consisting of five members.

(b) *Functions of the Board.*—(i) To examine the qualifications of applicants for adoption as Congress candidates and to determine their fitness in consultations with local associations affiliated to Congress.

(ii) To determine which, if any, candidate should be adopted by Congress with reference to any particular constituency.

(c) *Qualifications of Candidates.*—(i) Every candidate shall have been, for a period of not less than six months immediately preceding his application, a member of the Congress Executive Committee or of an association affiliated to Congress.

(ii) Every candidate shall subscribe to the Congress Creed and undertake to abide by the decision of Congress.

(d) *Duties of Congress towards Candidates.*—(i) To establish election officers in such areas as the Executive Committee may consider necessary.

(ii) To appoint sub-committees for arranging election meetings and for preparing general election literature suitable for each constituency.

(iii) To arrange for Congress Leaders to visit constituencies which are contested by Congress candidates.

(iv) To meet all legitimate demands which may be made by a candidate for the purpose of advancing his candidature.

(e) The decisions of the Nomination Board in all matters referred to them shall be final and binding on Congress.

Mr. R. S. S. Gunewardene seconded.

There was an adjournment for tea at this stage.

Messrs. W. A. de Silva, D. S. Senanayake and G. C. S. Corea opposed the resolution. Mr. D. R. Jayawardene spoke in support of the resolution. Mr. S. W. R. Dias Bandaranaike also spoke on the motion.

Mr. W. D. Perera proposed an amendment to the effect that the consideration of the resolution be deferred for a special session of the Ceylon National Congress, three months hence. *Mudaliyar* N. Wickremaratne seconded. Mr. W. F. B. Perera opposed the amendment as well as the resolution.

Mr. A. L. J. Croos Dabrera moved the further amendment: "That the resolution be referred back to the Executive Committee for reconsideration at a special session of Congress."

The mover and the seconder of the previous amendment accepted this amendment.

Mr. E. W. Abeygunasekera supported Mr. Dabrera's amendment. The amendment of Mr. Croos Dabrera was put to the house and was carried by a majority, 41 voting for and 20 against.

Sir Henry L. de Mel proposed the following resolution:

This Congress is of opinion that the cultivation of thrift, integrity and business habits constitute the prime means of obtaining economic salvation and calls upon associations constituting Congress to make every endeavour to organise and successfully work Co-operative Credit Societies throughout the country.

Mr. D. B. Rambukwella seconded. Carried unanimously.

Mr. Simon Abeywickrema proposed the following resolution:

> The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that instead of the present method of registering as voters only those who apply for registration, the Government should itself undertake the registration of all qualified voters.

Mr. G. G. Punchihewa seconded. Mr. E W Abeygunasekera spoke in support. The motion was put to the house and carried unanimously.

The President after thanking the delegates for their presence and the interest they had taken in discussions declared the sessions closed.

E. A. P. Wijeyeratne,
President.

P. D. S. Jayasekera,
Hony. Jt. Secretary,
14.1.35.

27 : C. Draft Report on the Sessions

The 16th annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress was held on Saturday at Ananda College in the presence of a large assembly of delegates and visitors, including a number of ladies.

After the presidential address by Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne various resolutions were adopted including one for remedying the defects in the present Constitution.

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1. C. N. A., 60/93 ; a handwritten manuscript. The report appeared in the *CDN*, 17 December 1934, under the following headlines supplied by the draft : "*Ceylon National Congress Sessions*" and "*New President's Review of the Political Situation.*" A third caption was also included by the *CDN* : "Appeal to Youth : Unanimous Resolution on Reforms."

Proceedings began at 10 a.m. Those present included Sir D. B. Jayatilaka, The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake, the Hon. Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara, Mrs. A. D. Molamure, Mrs. Naysum Savaranamuttu and several other members of the State Council who belong to the Congress.

R. S. Tennekoon's Address

Mr. R. S. Tennekoon, Chairman of the Reception Committee, in welcoming the delegates and the President elect, said the most important matter they had in hand was the consideration of the resolution regarding the reform of the present Constitution.

After stressing the need for united agitation he said:

"Let me on behalf of the Congress, extend the hand of fellowship to our British brethren. I do ask them not to obstruct out political progress, but to encourage and advise us to attain our object of securing responsible government within the British Empire. They would understand our position better, than judging our claims, if they would place themselves in our position.

I would earnestly ask them to play a straight and honourable game with us. If they do so I could assure them that we would play the game with them in the same manner.

To our friends from the North we extend our sincere co-operation. Do not distrust us. Do not fear that you will be lost within our fold. Follow in the noble footsteps of your illustrious leader, the first President of the Ceylon National Congress—Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam—and join hands with us for the political emancipation of our motherland.

Now let me extend the hand of political fellowship to my Kandyan brethren—we who kept the Sinhalese flag flying for the three hundred years after our other brethren had gone under foreign rule. The Congress is not unmindful of our great achievements and noble deeds. But let us take our minds beyond three hundred years and think of our greatness as a united nation, a united Sri Lanka. We must

not stand aloof from the rest of our brethren. Let us join hands with them and fight together in the same ranks to gain our past glory. 'United we stand, divided we fall.'

To the other communities too, we extent the same hand of fellowship and sincere co-operation."

Referring to the recent visit to Ceylon of the Duke of Gloucester, Mr. Tennekoon said: "I feel it is my duty to refer to the visit to our fair shores of the third son of his gracious Majesty the King. With the deep sense of loyalty which has always characterized the Ceylonese, His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester was accorded a truly national welcome. This visit was for the purpose of giving practical effect to a most gracious wish of His Majesty that the Throne and Crown of the last Sinhalese King should be returned to the land from where they were taken.

Let us hope that a similar wish may spring in His Majesty's heart, to return to us the Sceptre and Sword of State as part of the programme of events in the celebrations of His Majesty's 25th anniversary of his accession to the Throne."

In conclusion Mr. Tennekoon invited the President of the Congress, Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne to take the chair as President "and, with us, weave the fabric of liberty for the wearing of Sri Lanka."

Mr. Wijeyeratne, the President then took the chair amidst applause, and he was garlanded by Mr. A. [illegible] Abeyesundere.

A band of six little boys of the [illegible] clad in national costume then came on the platform and sang the Congress Anthem to the accompaniment of serapina.

E. A. P. Wijeyeratne's Presidential Address

Today the Ceylon National Congress enters upon the [illegible] year of its existence and the generosity of [illegible] its constituent Assemblies has placed me in [illegible]

1. The President's address [illegible]

momentous period of this Island's history. It would be ungracious on my part if I do not express my gratitude for this signal honour conferred upon me. I do not pretend to that degree of modesty in assuming that I have been selected as a matter of mere routine. I would rather have the satisfaction of believing that the choice has fallen upon me for this specific reason, that those who have worked for the Congress and its ideals needed the services of someone who was willing to carry on the fight with enthusiasm and was ready to spend his energies for the cause that we have at heart.

From the very beginning it had been my privilege to take that enthusiastic interest in the Congress which the youth of this country alone is capable of showing. And during the years of its vicissitudes, during its triumphs and its travails, I have never ceased in my [*sic*] faith that the Ceylon National Congress was the one Institution that afforded the greatest opportunity to every section of the people in this country and to every shade of opinion—and what is more —to the old as well as to the young, to join together for the common purpose—to stand together on a common platform, to obtain the political emancipation of our country. I therefore consider that in selecting me you have paid a compliment to the youth of this country, and that you believe, as I believe, that the future is in the hands of the younger generation.

The older Congress with its statesmen, its scholars, had really harnessed the workers of yesterday. These stalwarts had done and are still doing the work splendidly and to the best of their ability, work, if I may say so, suited to their generation. I take it that it is your desire to respond to the challenge of the present and to leave the immediate solution of the problems of this country more and more into the safe-keeping, to the earnestness, the enthusiasm and to the loyalty of the younger generation.

I do not propose to take you back either to the early history dealing with the struggle for political emancipation, to the days when the highest ambition of the statesmen of old was to secure an unofficial nominated majority, nor to

the yet later times when an unofficial elected majority in the Legislature would have satisfied the then elder statesmen of our country. In our own generation the advent of a few unofficials into the then Executive Council and the provision for an elected Speaker would have satisfied the requirements of our political enthusiasts.

Today we have garnered the harvest of the struggles of those earlier years, and I venture to state that in the progressive development of the political freedom of our country the Ceylon National Congress has been the main, if not the sole, driving force. The transition from representative government to responsible government was brought about as a result of the introduction of the Reforms suggested by the Donoughmore Commission; and even in this wider association of the representatives of the people in the government of the country the Ceylon National Congress has been the foremost champion.

In the course of remarks I shall confine myself to the Constitution under which we are working, to the opportunities we have had and are enjoying to carry out the objects the Congress has had at heart, to the work that has been attempted during the brief space of its existence, to the difficulties we have to contend with, and lastly to those alterations and amendments which are immediately necessary to enable the representatives of the people to bring about the objective for which this Congress has been agitating throughout the entire period of its existence.

It is necessary particularly at this juncture of our political history and of the history of the Congress itself, that all sober and earnest-minded men and women faced with the tremendously complicated economic and political situation should keep before their minds definitely and clearly the objective for which this Congress has been established. I can do no better than read to you Article I, which is the fundamental creed of the Congress:

> The aim of the Ceylon National Congress is to secure for the people of Ceylon responsible government and the status of a self-governing member of the British

Empire. This end is to be achieved by constitutional methods by a reform of the existing system of government and administration, by a vigorous development of self-governing institutions and by organising and fostering the intellectual, moral and economic resources of the country.

It is necessary that we should re-affirm our faith in this creed of the Congress and to give it a true and correct interpretation. To me, as it must be to you, it means nothing less than this, that we shall endeavour to the best of our ability and with all the enthusiasm we are capable of to obtain for this country full and complete self-government without having any mental or other reservations and to establish the highest standard of material wealth, human freedom, and cultural development that any free nation is capable of achieving; and the methods that have to be adopted for this purpose must be to stimulate and organise the people of this country to carry on the struggle with confidence, with honesty of purpose and determination towards that end.

It is necessary at this stage to pause for one brief moment and to take stock of the general political situation during the past four years—between the time of the acceptance of the Donoughmore Scheme of Reforms and the present. I would be false to myself if I do not confess that this has been a period of silence and inactivity. Not only the Congress but every shade of progressive political opinion seem to have suspended their activities and to have adopted an attitude of silent watchfulness. I refuse to believe that this has been the result of indifference but rather to a sincere desire to give this novel constitution a fair and honest trial during its experimental stage. This silence has undoubtedly had its drawbacks. The Congress has failed to keep before its mind the second, and if I may venture to say, the more important objective in view, namely, its vigorous agitation for the harnessing of the economic resources of the country. It has also very nearly driven away from its fold that most valuable asset in the body politic, namely the awakened youth of this country, restive,

impatient and full of ideals and enthusiasm. But the most serious danger has been the opportunity that has been afforded by our silence to those reactionary elements to make another bid to foster the canker of communalism and to maintain the privileges of vested interests.

Oriental peoples, especially the Ceylonese, are said to be adverse to self-criticism But it is necessary to take stock of the present situation ; to find out how far the decisions of the Congress as manifested in the various resolutions passed from year to year have been carried out, whether we have had full and ample scope to give effect to those resolutions, whether the Constitution under which we are working has in any way obstructed the progressive development of these ideals, and lastly what steps should be taken to amend or to alter the provisions of the Constitution which prevent the fullest scope for such development.

I believe that it is the duty of the Legislature, quite apart from political agitation and communal squabbles, to make every endeavour to improve the condition of health, of education, of the food supply and the economic development of the people. The Congress had agitated for the improvement of the rural conditions of the masses, that they should be given a greater share in the selection of headmen, in the control of excise policy, and of local option, and that they should be entrusted solely and unfettered [sic] with the development of their local institutions. I venture to believe that during the last four years these decisions have been given effect to in various ways. The Ministry for Home Affairs is trying with a considerable degree of success the experiment of entrusting the excise work to the people themselves—work of detection of excise offences to unofficial excise officers.[1]

For the first time a greater and a gradually increasing voice in the selection of their own headmen has been conceded to the people. For the first time again after the establishment of British administration, Village Committees

1. The last sentence has been deleted.

have been given full and unfettered opportunity of electing their own members and of unofficial Chairmen in keeping with the long established traditions which have stood the test of centuries. The old archaic local government institutions such as local boards and sanitary boards are giving place to the more modern, more democratic urban district councils, no longer spoon-fed by official interference or official control. The Ceylon National Congress from its very inception pleaded strongly for the extension of this method of local government and is entitled to congratulate itself that its continued agitation has met with such speedy success.

The question of the Ceylonization of the services has been another of the most pressing demands of the Ceylon National Congress. We ought to be glad to appreciate the fact that a very considerable degree of success attended those efforts. In February, 1933, the following resolution was accepted by the State Council on the motion moved on behalf of the Board of Ministers, and in the absence of the Honourable the Leader of the House who was away in Europe, by the Honourable Mr. D. S. Senanayake:

> That no new appointment (either a fresh appointment or a transfer from His Majesty's Service abroad) of non-Ceylonese other than the appointment of the Governor or of Judges of the Supreme Court or of Officers of State shall be made to the Public Services hereafter, except on terms and conditions to be determined in each case by resolution of this Council on the report of the Board of Ministers after consideration of the recommendations of the Executive Committee or the Officer of State in whose charge the Department in which the appointment is made functions.

In fairness to most of the Ministries now functioning it must be admitted that they have successfully pressed upon the Government the adoption of this principle. The Education Ministry is definitely recruiting only Ceylonese for the various posts under its control. The Ministry of Agriculture has done the same. In the Department of Health the question does not arise very acutely as it has been one of the

Departments which had been manned for many years almost entirely by Ceylonese I am not satisfied, however, that a like desire animates *the Ministry of Communications* and Works. There seems to be an unfortunate tendency in that Ministry to suffer from the most vicious of our political drawbacks, namely the inferiority complex This is really due not so much to any obstacles placed by the authorities either here or in England for the due employment of Ceylonese, but rather to a want of confidence on the part of those responsible for the management of the Departments under their control that the Ceylonese can well carry on [*sic*] with such success and efficiency as any recruited officer who has hitherto held these posts.

In the Civil Service and particularly in the Police Department there are still serious obstacles to be overcome, and we are told that the old and indefensible claim to maintain a ratio of recruited officers in both these departments should continue for the present. Herein lies one of the necessities *for the amendment of the Constitution On the question* as to whether it is necessary to retain or recruit any European officers for that branch of the Police Department known as the Port Police, His Excellency the Governor has put forward the contention that for the efficient administration of the Department the question of cadre was one of the functions allotted to the "Minister of Finance" and that he would be the proper adviser as to whether the number of European officers should be reduced or ultimately done away with. We shall not and we cannot permit the continuance of a system which imposes on a Ministry the influence and the will of the Treasury which was never meant to be anything more than advisory, but which is now assuming alarming proportions. We are therefore moving as indicated by one of the resolutions today the removal of the Officers of State and the substitution in their place of Ministers *responsible to the Council.*

It has been for years an accepted policy of the Congress that steps should be taken to re-organise the Police force of this country and to improve the unfortunate lot of the Prison population. Here again the Congress ılate

itself that a number of important reforms have been affected in Prison administration and full effect has been given to the recommendations of the Garvin Commission on Prison Reform. In the Police Department efforts are being made to recruit to its higher ranks new material with a broader outlook from amongst the public school boys of this country with a view to make the Police force an institution to help and assist the public rather than be a soul-less military machine.

We are not satisfied that the industrial development of the country has been given due prominence although the Congress has always placed it in the forefront of its annual programme of work. Vested interests have been too deeply rooted to enable a more progressive development in this direction. The Hydo-Electric Scheme, which a reluctant Government was forced to recognise as one of the greatest of our national assets, has not yet materialized and this delay has brought about a corresponding stagnation in the establishment of local industries. It is the duty of the Congress to keep a vigilant eye to prevent any further dilatoriness in this respect and to secure for our people one of the most assured means of furthering its economic prosperity.

The Congress agitation, supported by the few but persistent advocates of labour, has resulted in the passage of the first legislative measure for the benefit of the workers—I refer to the Workmen's Compensation Act. Side by side with the granting of relief in this direction it is imperative to introduce immediate measures to restrict the influx of cheap foreign labour into this country. Year by year the unrestricted influx of foreign labour, has displaced the Ceylonese worker by the most insidious of weapons—namely, the lowering of the standard of wages. The Congress should demand in the immediate future the restriction of this stream of immigration whilst at the same time using its endeavours to improve the lot of the Ceylonese labourer by raising his standard of living in accordance with the needs of a civilized society and by conceding to him such relief as schemes of health insurance and old age pensions can render.

One of the most notable instances of national helplessness was afforded in the course of this year in connection with the introduction of the quota system restricting the importation of cheap foreign cloth and substitution in its place of the more expensive textiles of Lancashire. If this country had sufficiently advanced its most ancient industry of manufacture of cloth we might have been prepared to meet, with some degree of success, the insolent challenge of Lancashire Combines and the still more menacing challenge, by means of an Order-in-Council, to our fiscal autonomy. The resolution dealing with the amendments to the Constitution therefore rightly demands that we should be given complete control of the finances of this country. If executive functions now entrusted to one of the Officers of State—namely, the Financial Secretary, are handed over to an elected Minister responsible to the Legislature this country would have so adjusted its Customs Duties as to have nullified the evil effects of this Order-in-Council. It would have also been possible for us to have entered into trade agreements with other countries so as to secure, on the basis of an equitable *quid pro quo*, an open market for the produce of our own land.

No measure of political freedom can avail a nation unless and until the nation has the capacity to appreciate and enjoy the blessings of that freedom. It should not be the endeavour of this Congress to obtain a transfer of political power from the hands of the foreign bureaucracy and concentrate it in the hands of our own people.[1] The Congress, true to its principles, must work unceasingly to make every man and woman in this country an enlightened citizen. No democracy in the world has functioned successfully upon a background of ignorance. It is our duty therefore to see that immediate steps are taken to make primary education, both in English and the Vernaculars, free and compulsory all over the country.

1. Here, we have followed an amendment which has been made by hand. The original makes better sense. It reads "and concentrate it in the hands of an oligarchy of intellect."

The Ceylon National Congress can rightly claim to have forced upon an unwilling Government a new orientation being given to its agricultural policy. For well nigh a century a process of spoliation had deprived the people of their lands. A series of heartless pieces of legislation culminating in the most detestable of all—The Waste Lands Ordinance, which in the words of Col. Wedgewood was "not only a bad Ordinance in itself, but which the British Government should never have introduced," had completed the work of brigandage. Practically every available portion of the wet zone whether on the top of hills or down in the valleys had passed from its natural and hereditary owners. We have at last been able to cry halt to this cruel and degenerate policy. If there is one thing for which the State Council can take credit or has justified its existence it is the successful passage of the recently enacted Land Ordinance. Thanks to the initiative, and the restless energy of the Minister of Agriculture this country has now an opportunity to render justice, however long-delayed, to its permanent inhabitants. Already in anticipation of the passage of this Ordinance an extent of nearly 150,000 acres have been allotted to the poor and the needy, so that they may form, in time, the nucleus of a class of peasant proprietors.

Agricultural development is taking place rapidly and in all directions. Already certain food supplies imported into the country are being reduced gradually, and are being replaced by local productions. The wilderness of Minneriya is being slowly but nevertheless assuredly transformed. An ambitious scheme to reconstruct the lost and forgotten network of tanks known as the Sea of Parakrama is under investigation, and the Ministry is applying for a vote of Rs. 3,000,000 to carry out a programme of irrigation works. It is important to remember that the present uncultivated areas in the Dry Zone really represent what formed the most thickly populated part of Ceylon in the past, at a time when the people, free from foreign domination, were at liberty to select what areas they wanted. It was when that area was under cultivation that Ceylon boasted of an abundant food supply and was justly renowned as the

"Granary of the East." It is this same area that still provides evidence of the glory and greatness of our people. The crumbling remains of dwellings, of temples and of tanks bear testimony to the high state of that lost civilisation. When the foreign invader came to Ceylon the most natural thing for that invader to do was to attempt to destroy the sources of the food supply of the people. The many yoda-elas, or the main channels, sometimes [illegible] long, were breached in several places and [illegible] suddenly went out of cultivation and the inhabitants [illegible] either to starve and surrender or leave the locality. [illegible] hoped that this great work of reconstruction will be [illegible] up with the same vigour and earnestness with which [illegible] other work of that Ministry has hitherto been [illegible] the foundation is laid to bund the Mahaweli at [illegible] to excavate the forgotten tunnel at [illegible] of the Rs. 3,000,000 which I trust the Council will [illegible] without delay, we shall truly be laying the [illegible] the new renaissance of this country.

Ladies and Gentlemen, I fear I have [illegible] patience somewhat long to [illegible] progressive ideals and achievements [illegible] has striven in the past. I have [illegible] who challenge the usefulness of [illegible] and that the various efforts made [illegible] rty this platform have been [illegible] to ever much more to be done [illegible] of to remain alert and watchful [illegible] rt ing further endeavours and [illegible] this forward policy.

There are difficulties [illegible] sation of these objectives [illegible] A form of Government [illegible] definite division and [illegible] present Constitution [illegible] the distinction [illegible] Ministers. The [illegible] and are not [illegible] tration. They [illegible]

in imperio, and have sometimes secured the adoption of measures without even the knowledge or approval of their colleagues. The Treasury has become the dictator to the Ministries, and has succeeded in adding financial burdens to the country under the guise of Pension Minutes. The Governor himself has on several occasions used his reserve powers in open defiance of the wishes of the Council. Last but not least, absence of an Independent Public Services Commission is a defect that must be remedied immediately.

I am sorry that the agitation, which started shortly after the new Constitution began to function, to modify and to remove its defects has not yet gained sufficient momentum. We are not yet informed as to what fate has finally attended the Ministers' efforts to give effect to the resolutions on Reforms. I hope to be able to place in the forefront during my year of service the constitutional issue and to insist with the full force, loyalty, and support of the Congress that those desirable amendments which we have agitated for should no longer be delayed.

We are labouring under a second handicap. It has not been possible to bring together on the same political platform the various communities living in this Island home of ours. It shall be my endeavour to do everything in my power to bring together under the banner of this great political organisation every section of the Ceylonese community.

I make a special appeal to the two great non-Ceylonese communities in our midst—the European and the Indian. And in appealing to them I am not unconscious of the fact that a certain amount of distrust and uneasiness has crept into our relations with one another. I am not one of those who believe that their interests in this country are primarily due to a desire to assist us to obtain our political freedom. The European Community particularly, perhaps out of all proportion to its numbers, has much agricultural and trade interests in our midst. In the same way, the

Indian Community is fast establishing a strong and ever-growing position in the business life of Ceylon. It may be that both these communities view with some degree of misgiving our struggle for freedom, perchance because they are uneasy that their interests may thereby suffer. That is the very reason why we should establish a 'concordat' with these two communities. It shall be my endeavour to dispel all suspicions from their minds and to assure them that we shall be always willing and ready to respect their legitimate rights. And they in turn should realise that though the progress may be slow, though the path may be thorny, though there may be many obstacles to surmount, the Ceylonese people will never rest content until they reach the goal of their political ambition Realising that, we trust that they will sympathise with us in our hopes and our aspirations, so that they will in turn get that sympathy from the people of this country to enable them to carry on, peacefully and with good-will, their own special undertakings.

We have also yet to learn the value and the necessity for remorseless discipline. We have not yet paid sufficient attention to the need for united action, to the necessity for loyalty to party, and above all loyalty to the principles which this Congress has stood for throughout its brief and eventful career. I hope that the resolution to enforce party discipline and party loyalty will enable the Congress to secure the return to the State Council of a large number of men ready to follow the lead of the Congress and to support Congress policy on the lines I have indicated above.

To my mind the greatest handicap under which we are labouring now is the absence of the progressive youthful elements within its ranks. To me it is a most distressing thing that they are standing aloof. I know that it is not due to want of enthusiasm on their part or that they are not thrilled with the hope of political freedom. I shall not be far wrong if I venture to surmise that their aloofness is due to their dissatisfaction with the methods we have hitherto followed. Theirs is a protest against supineness,

against indifference, against the absence of earnestness and because they see signs of wavering amongst the undisciplined ranks of the Congress. Their absence will be ill for the Congress. It will not be well for the youth themselves. Here we have an organisation with over a 100 branches throughout the country, an organisation that has done work in the past, that has stood the test of years, that has the seed of yet greater things in the future. I appeal to the youth of the country, to the idealists who form the Youth Congress of Jaffna, to the progressives of Colombo and of Galle, to the Kandyan Youth League, throbbing with the pulsations of a new life, and lastly to that earnest group of young men imbued with the best and highest conceptions of human well-being—the Socialist Commonwealth—I appeal to all these to join us and work under a common banner. Our ways may appear to be different, but surely our ideals can and must remain the same.

I have set before me as the real task for the coming year, the task of re-awakening a public response for political work. I want to create a great and abiding political enthusiasm in this country. I want to make every association in every District a living and vital force radiating its influence in those areas where they exist. It is the mission of youth to supply this driving force. Throughout the ages, throughout the long centuries, in the history of every great nation, ancient or modern, youth has been in the vanguard of progress. I want them to bring into the Congress their high ideals, their enthusiasm, their spirit of loyalty, the light of faith that never fades. I promise them in return that they will have abundant opportunity for work, for service.

When my year of service is over and when we can look back to the period of our common endeavour, I hope and pray that it shall be possible for every man and woman interested in this movement to say that they have made some contribution, however small or insignificant that effort may be, to increase the sum-total of the happiness of the inhabitants of this country so that they may be able to

march with the greater faith, with greater courage, and with every hope of success, along the path of political independence.

Rest of the Morning Session

Mr. L. W. A. de Soysa, Chairman of the Moratuwa Maha Jana Sabha, moved the first resolution on the agenda which was as follows:

> The present Constitution having been given a fair trial, the Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that it requires amendment in the following respects:
>
> (a) The State Council to have the complete control of the finances of the Country.
>
> (b) The removal of the Officers of State and the substitution in their place of Ministers responsible to the Governor,
>
> (c) The appointment of a non-official Public Services Commission.
>
> (d) A sufficient limitation of the reserve powers of the Governor,
>
> and calls upon all its members to pledge themselves to work for the immediate achievement of this object.

Mr. de Soysa said it was an insult to the country that the control of the finances did not rest with an elected minister of the country. In no other country which enjoyed any measure of responsible Government did such an anomaly prevail. He hoped that with the next instalment of reforms this most necessary change, together with the substitution of the Officers of State by elected Ministers, would be achieved.

Example of Canada

Mr. Victor C. Perera, Chairman of the Nugegoda Maha Jana Sabha, seconded the resolution. In the course of his speech he criticised the Board of Ministers for asking the permission of the Secretary of State to press their demands for reforms. In that matter, he said, they exhibited a slave mentality which the country would never endorse.

No Secretary of State or any other power, he said, could prevent them from demanding that which was their birthright. If they were such poor creatures or so selfishly wedded to their own personal concerns that they dared not strike a blow for their country's sake, then justly would they be kept down and trampled on, for they would then deserve nothing better.

Continuing, he dwelt on the backward state of Canada when Lord Durham courageously decided to grant self-government to that vast country because, in the words of Lord Durham himself, " the continued negligence of the British Government left the mass of the people without any of the institutions which would have elevated them in freedom and civilisation. "

The history of Canada's political evolution was a tonic to those whose faith in the healing and ennobling power of popular institutions was weak. What was true of Canada could be true of India and Ceylon.

His Excellency the Governor had the other day, in a public speech, humorously remarked that if some Ceylonese young men had their way they would soon get rid of the British. But he (the speaker) could assure His Excellency that the great majority of the people of Ceylon were not of that opinion. Home Rule or Dominion Status for Ceylon did not mean separation from Britain. Ceylon wanted to stay in the Commonwealth of Nations known as the British Empire, but as an equal partner.

Mr. D. G. Weerasinghe spoke in support of the resolution, which being put to the house, was carried unanimously.

The proceedings were then adjourned till 1.30 p.m. and the delegates and some of the visitors were entertained to lunch.

Proceedings in the Afternoon

On resumption the following were elected members of the Executive Committee of the Congress on the motion of Mr. P. H. Abraham Silva, the Secretary, seconded by Mr. A. W. H. Abeyesundere. [Here follows a list of the Executive Committee members] [1].

Resolution on Party Scheme

Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya then moved the following resolution :

The Ceylon National Congress approved of the following scheme for the nomination of candidates at the forthcoming State Council Elections :

(*a*) A Nomination Board : The Congress shall at its annual sessions appoint a Nomination Board consisting of five members.

(*b*) Functions of the Board : (i) To examine the qualifications of applicants for adoption as Congress candidates and to determine their fitness in consultation with local associations affiliated to Congress ; (ii) To determine which, if any, candidate should be adopted by Congress with reference to any particular constituency.

(*c*) Qualifications of candidates : (i) Every candidate shall have been, for a period of not less than six months immediately preceding his application, a member of the Congress Executive Committee or of an association affiliated to Congress ; (ii) Every candidate shall subscribe to the Congress Creed and undertake to abide by the decisions of Congress.

(*d*) Duties of Congress towards the candidates : (i) To establish election offices in such areas as the Executive Committee may consider necessary ; (ii) To appoint Sub-Committees for arranging election meetings and for preparing general election literature suitable for

1. The list is omitted because it is reproduced elsewhere. See *supra*, pp. 39-41.

each constituency ; (iii) To arrange for Congress leaders to visit constituencies which are contested by Congress candidates; (iv) To meet all legitimate demands which may be made by a candidate for the purpose of advancing his candidature.

(*e*) The decisions of the Nomination Board in all matters referred to them shall be final and binding on Congress.

After discussion, as reported elsewhere,[1] the resolution was referred back to the Executive Committee to be brought up again, if necessary, three months hence.

The discussion was interrupted at 4.30 p.m. when Congress adjourned for tea and were the guests of Mr. & Mrs. R. S. Tennekoon.

Co-operative Societies

After the resolution was dealt with, Sir Henry L. de Mel with the permission of the house moved the following resolution:

> This Congress is of opinion that the cultivation of thrift, integrity and business habits constitute the prime means of obtaining economic salvation and calls upon associations constituting Congress to make every endeavour to organize and successfully work Co-operative Societies throughout the Country.

Mr. D. B. Rambukwella seconded. Carried unanimously.

Mr. Simon Abeywickrema proposed the following resolution:

> The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that instead of the present method of registering as voters only those who apply for registration, the Government should itself undertake the registration of all qualified voters.

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1. See *infra*, pp. 1133–1137.

Mr. G. G. Punchihewa seconded. Mr. E W. Abeygunasekera spoke in support. The motion was put to the House and carried unanimously and the Congress Sessions concluded.

Discussion on Resolution 2 Re Party Scheme

At the annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held at Ananda College on Saturday the scheme submitted by the Executive Committee for the nomination of candidates at the forthcoming State Council elections encountered considerable opposition and was eventually referred back for further consideration.

Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya who moved the resolution embodying the scheme said that the resolution was one which had been engaging the attention of the leaders of the Congress for several years. Before the present Council came into being it was the intention of the leaders of Congress that they should form a party in Council.

Only Three Ministers

It was true that the largest group in the State Council represented the Congress, but on the Board of Ministers there were only three Congressmen. They must, therefore, realize the great necessity there was to elect members of the Congress at the next election. The Ceylon National Congress was the oldest if not one of the oldest political associations in the country. It was at one time a very strong organisation but its strength had now been considerably weakened. The Congress was described as a coterie composed of a handful of dictators.

After dealing with the activities of the Congress for the past few years, Mr. Amarasuriya said that the Committee although it endeavoured to carry out to the best of its

1. This report appeared as a separate item in the *CDN*, 17 December 1934. The draft (*C.N.A.*, *60/93*) has been written on separate sheets and has the note "Separate Article." The following captions were supplied and followed by the *CDN* :

Congress "Party" Scheme
Opposition to Proposal
Resolution Referred Back.

powers the resolution passed in Congress could not give effect to them as they had been weakened to a great extent by the absence of the necessary co-operation from various affiliated Associations, even those who had been elected to the Congress Executive.

Mr. R. S. S. Gunewardene, seconding, said that he regretted the fact that in the past Congress ideals and Congress principles had been violated and cast aside by its staunchest supporters in dealing with matters of national importance.

The people, however, were not in a position to take any disciplinary action against the offenders, because public opinion in the country had not yet developed to such an extent as to make such action possible.

Opposition

Mr. W. A. de Silva opposed the resolution and called upon those present to make it nugatory. He warned Congress against taking a false step at this stage which would lead to the total extinction of Congress. They must not imagine that the Congress should take upon itself an all embracing program of public works, political reform, economic development and many more things. No, the aim and purpose of the Ceylon National Congress was the ultimate attainment of self-government and political freedom. They had not achieved that aim and until they reached that goal they should not divide themselves into parties and factions which would lead to endless troubles among themselves. He recalled the historical instance of the story of the Nagas and Yakkas of ancient Lanka, who met in Congress, and the utter (riot ?) ....[1] and pandemonium that followed the adoption of a resolution to form into parties, not dissimilar to the present resolution. He appealed to the house to turn the resolution down.

A delegate inquired whether the Congress Executive had taken any action to prevent contests between Congress leaders in Council for the offices of Speaker and Deputy Speaker in the State Council.

1. We have reproduced this section as it appears in the draft.

The Chairman (Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne) replied that *it was in order to prevent such an unseemly situation in future* that the resolution before the meeting was brought up.

Minister's View

Mr. D. S Senanayake, who was also opposed to the resolution, said that if they adopted it, it would be a set-back not only to the Congress but to the political progress of the country. The President confessed he was a youth and the future of the country rested on the youth. However having been a rural inhabitant and assimilated much village wisdom, what struck him forcibly was the respect and regard paid to age in village life.

On the threshing floor a veteran bull was always used to lead the team to keep the younger cattle in their places. Similarly, he believed it was essential that there should be *well-tried and mature leaders to restrain the exuberance of* youth. He earnestly requested the delegates to weigh carefully the disadvantages and advantages of a party system in Ceylon under the present circumstances. He was personally of opinion that if the resolution was adopted, a necessary corollary would be to pass another resolution to demand the resignation of the party from the Council in the event of their failure to further the cause of the reforms.

Support for Motion

Mr. D. R. Jayawardene, speaking in support of the motion, said that whenever a chance appeared for youth to come forward Messrs. W. A. de Silva, D. S. Senanayake and Sir D. B. Jayatilaka and other veterans interfered and closed the door against them. He had a great respect for those gentlemen who, he said, had honestly served the country in the past, but the time had come, in his opinion, for them to retire, and give a chance to the younger generation.

Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike said that the issues involved were very important and they should be carefully considered before arriving at a decision. If Congress nominations meant that the people already working are to be told they could not come forward, or the person working in one area was told to go to another constituency, it was possible they could leave Congress and stand against the Congress delegates and be always opposed to Congress. If they nominated people who had already announced their candidature, then it would be meaningless and was of no particular value.

After an interval for tea the discussion was continued.

Reference Back Moved

Mr. W. D. Perera (Kandy) proposed an amendment to the effect that the consideration of the resolution be deferred for a special session of the National Congress, three months hence.

Mudaliyar N. Wickremaratne seconded.

Mr. W. F. B. Perera opposed the amendment and the resolution.

Mr. A. L. J. Croos Dabrera moved the further amendment:

> That the resolution be referred back to the Executive Committee for reconsideration and that if necessary a resolution be brought up again for consideration at a Special Session of Congress, three months hence..

The mover and the seconder of the previous amendment accepted this amendment.

Mr. E. W. Abeygunasekera supported the amendment.

Question of Finance

Mr. G. C. S. Corea, opposing the resolution, said that if after nominating candidates they failed to secure at least 35 seats in the State Council to represent the Congress

Party it would be a very severe blow to Congress and i
principles. The work before them was essentially to pav
the way to ensure the successful return of a majority grou
of Congress candidates. He supported the amendment and
advised caution.

For a party system to be successfully established, he continued, funds were needed. They talked of a party system, but when a meeting was held the Chairman had himself to pay the rent of the hall, or go begging to obtain the money. Such being their position, he asked where they could find the money to support their cause if a rival party was formed. He added that he had objected to the motion when it was brought up in that Committee.

Mr. Amarasuriya, in the course of his reply, said if the motion was postponed it would never come back for discussion. It was far better, he said, to reject the resolution than postpone a decision on it.

The amendment of Mr. Croos Dabrera was carried by a majority.

27: D. Appendices to the Sixteenth Annual Sessions

(1) Ceylon Daily News Editorial, 17 December 1934: "Ceylon National Congress"

Anyone who hoped to discover indications of a determination on the part of the Ceylon National Congress to play an invigorating part in the public life of the country is bound to be disappointed by what transpired at the annual session of that body on Saturday. Ever since the Congress fell from its great position as the acknow-
edged palladium of the people's rights its one public
eeting has become merely an occasion for the President
f the year to make an exhaustive speech full of big claims
d bigger promises that are never fulfilled. For the last
or seven years the public have heard a repetition of
esidential speeches which did not lead to action.
olutions are discussed and passed or post

b

everything ends in talk and for another twelve months nothing is heard of them. Only the periodical meetings of the Executive Committee serve as a reminder that there is such an institution as the Congress in existence. The one difference in the tenor of the proceedings this year was the attendance of a larger audience containing former Presidents and others who have flirted with various political organisations as it suited them. This, however, is no more than a sign that the general election is in the offing and that Legislative aspirants anxious to find support in every possible quarter are not losing any opportunity of making new friends and renewing old acquaintances.

Those who have the real interests of the Congress and of the country at heart must ask themselves seriously whether it is fitting or dignified for the Congress to be regarded as a convenient means of squeezing into the State Council. Is it not placing a premium on insincerity and hollow lip-service to the ideals that inspired the founders of the Congress to encourage the idea that men should join it and work under its aegis not in order to serve the country but to serve themselves and attain their own private ambitions? It is precisely because such an idea has in fact been encouraged that year after year the Congress is unable to point to any solid achievement to justify its existence. It was useless for the President on Saturday to try to impress his audience with claims that the Ceylonisation of the services and the Land Ordinance, to mention but two items, are feathers in the Congress cap. The Minister of Agriculture will be the last person to attribute the land legislation he piloted to any efforts made by the Congress. The Congress might just as well claim on the eve of the general election to have assumed control of the Government when the Treasury was empty and succeeded so well that it replenished the State's coffers till they overflowed. Fanciful pretentions of this description seem to prove that the Congress is only too keenly aware of the barrenness of its record during recent years and of the need to save its face when called upon to give an account of its stewardship.

Without any acerbity it can fairly be said that the Ceylon National Congress has not gone even a little way in rehabilitating itself in public esteem. Where a vital organisation with a truly national program would have gone from strength to strength, the Congress has stood still and stagnated. Its executive has preferred the easier path of indulging in make-believe instead of establishing adequate machinery and building up a war-chest to wage the country's cause. It is this play with make-believe and pursuit of personal ends that have more than anything else prevented some of the most promising members of the rising generation from casting in their lot with Congress. The President declared on Saturday his conviction that Ceylon's destiny lies in the hands of the younger generation. It is all the more deplorable in the circumstances that the Congress has earned a reputation which epels young men equipped with intellectual capacity and he supreme gift of idealism. The Congress, or those in ontrol of it, should realise that if it is once again to become living power in the land, it must draw upon the resources oresented by the young men of brains and character who not want to use the Congress as a stepping-stone to a t in Council or a place in the public eye but are eager levote themselves to national work with no thought of ard. Until the Ceylon National Congress recognises this nd rids itself of the incubus of opportunism it cannot to regain public respect and admiration in anything e measure it used to enjoy then in its great and palmy

ditorial in the Ceylon Independent,? 1934:
lizing the Congress."

a considerable lapse of years, the Ceylon National has assumed the character of a strikingly repre- body. There has been a notable accession of the element into the Congress and it looks as if the

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rom the Sir Edwin Wijeyeratne MSS: see C.N.A., 25.20/14.

Tamils are not unwilling to give it a moderate amount of support. Considering the extravagances of the Tamil extremists, it would not be surprising if the sensible and stable elements of the Tamil community will be compelled to seek refuge in the reasonable creed of the Congress. The enthusiasm and public spiritedness of such Kandyan leaders as Mr. R. S. Tennekoon, among many others, shows that the Congress is capable of winning the loyalty of all those who have a permanent interest in the wellbeing of this country. It is a very happy circumstance that at this juncture the Presidentship of the Congress has devolved upon Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne whose comprehensive sympathies and liberal attitude towards all schools of political opinion will be a guarantee of general and widespread satisfaction. It is bound to be realised sooner or later that the political progress of this country must be irretrievably bound up with an organization like the Congress which alone can claim to speak for the nationalist sentiment of this island. The extent to which this organization can be useful to this country can be gauged by reference to the unique services rendered to Nationalist India by the Indian National Congress.

The President's address was passioned, balanced and judicious and was distinguished throughout by a vivid awareness of the realities of the political situation of Ceylon. Mr. Wijeyeratne in every way proved himself equal to a great occasion. His address was also a discerning and comprehensive survey of the important events of recent times. But the most significant feature of Mr. Wijeyeratne's speech was a combination of convincing sincerity and generous conciliatoriness, which should go far towards making every community realise that all that the Congress requires is the opportunity for working together with each of them for the common good of all. The only inauspicious circumstance is that the President of the Congress will have to count upon certain disruptive forces working from within and which would be a more insidious danger than any opposition from without. As Mr. D. R. Jayawardene stated in the course of a piquant and revealing speech, the rank

and file of the Congress can be depended on for its main work in spite of the squabbles and divisions of the vested hierarchy which will neither abdicate nor serve.

An unexpected surprise was sprung upon the Congress meeting when there was precipitate and unreasoning opposition to the Congress becoming a party in substance and power rather than by implication and in name. So long as the Congress does not become an organised party with definite principle and solid mass allegiances, it will continue to be the happy hunting ground of designing politicians The resolution moved by Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya was intended as a first step towards laying the foundation of Congress as a party. The individualistic politicians who desire to attenuate the power of Congress into an imaginary semblance sensed the danger to them from having to conform to the settled discipline of a party and therefore revolted. But since there is evidence of the Congress becoming democratic the individualists will have to make way. The strength of the Congress lies in having the masses behind it and it is time that a definite and determined move is made in all effectiveness to broad-base itself on the people's will. This is the President's great task.

(3) "An Appeal to the Youth of Ceylon:" A New Year Message from E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, President of the Ceylon National Congress, January 1935[1]

I am grateful to you, Mr. Editor, for the opportunity you have given me to broadcast a New Year Message to the youth of this country. It is a special privilege to me that I am able to address them in my capacity as the President of the Ceylon National Congress. During the short period of its existence this great and once all powerful organisation has had many vicissitudes. It has had its triumphs as well as its travails but the outlook has not been so distressingly gloomy as it is at present. To my mind the greatest handicap under which the Congress is

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1. Copied from a typescript, signed by Wijeyeratne and dated 3rd January 1935, found in the Sir Edwin Wijeyeratne MSS, (see C.N.A., 25.20/14).

now labouring is the absence of the progressive youth elements within its ranks. I shall endeavour in the course of this brief article to discuss the causes which in my opinion have contributed to this aloofness on the part of youth, to place before them the programme of work in which the Congress will be engaged in the coming year and to appeal to the younger elements in this country to come once more under the banner of the Congress and to help us with their loyalty and enthusiasm to bring about that larger life of freedom for which we are all working today.

I shall not be far wrong if I venture to surmise that the present cleavage is due to a growing dissatisfaction in the minds of the youth of Ceylon with the methods that are being followed by the elder statesmen. This is youths' protest against supineness, against indifference, against the absence of earnestness—a protest against the signs of wavering amongst the undisciplined ranks of the Congress. The question is asked everywhere whether the Congress means anything more than an occasional gathering to pass pious resolutions, whether it is not composed of a caucus bent on furthering their own selfish aims.

As regards the charge that the Congress is not doing intensive work throughout the country I must plead guilty. But it would not be fair to blame the Congress alone for the present apathy. If we take a stock of the general political situation during the past four years [in which] this novel Constitution has been functioning, we cannot help noticing that every shade of progressive political opinion seems to have suspended its activities. I refuse to believe that this is due to indifference on the part of our people but rather to a desire to give this Constitution a fair and honest trial during its experimental stage. This silence however has had alarming results. There is no definite progressive political programme before the country. All of us seem to have lost sight of the necessity for a vigorous agitation to harness our economic resources. In place of one all-embracing national organisation we are split up into several political groups. Our elder statesmen, no longer

united, are showing signs of impatience at criticism and are losing touch with this splendid idealism of youth. The latter in turn are restive and critical but unable to give of their best for want of guidance. Such a situation has been ill for the Congress and the country. It has not been well for the youth of Ceylon.

This lack of political unity has brought about dangers in other directions. The bureaucracy is spreading its tentacles everywhere and is attempting to strengthen its position in every conceivable way. I believe the power of the Treasury is today greater than it ever was. Instead of being merely an adviser on financial matters we have now, in effect, a complete Financial Ministry, owing allegiance only to the Governor, over-riding the decisions of the various Ministries and creating for itself a kind of dictatorship which was never contemplated even by the authors of the present scheme of reforms. Our silence has given an opportunity to those reactionary elements in our midst to make another bid to foster the canker of communalism and to maintain the privileges of vested interests. They have used to the fullest their resources to carry on a vigorous campaign in England to belittle the work of the State Council and the Ceylonese politicians. Throughout the whole of 1933 and the early half of 1934 effort after effort was made in Parliament to withdraw even the modicum of power which we enjoy. The dangerous practice of legislating by an Order-in-Council and by the use of the reserve powers of the Governor has been resorted to on more than one occasion, and to cap it all, an insolent challenge has been made to our fiscal autonomy by the most indefensible of all measures, the recent Order-in-Council dealing with the quotas.

In the political sphere, the Congress proposes to carry on an effective agitation both here and in England to get the Constitution amended. It shall be the work of the Congress to give every assistance to the Board of Ministers to bring about those changes as have been foreshadowed

in their memorandum. It is clear to everyone that no further political progress can be made unless we insist and secure the removal of the Officers of State, unless we assume complete control of our finances, and unless we limit those reserved powers of the Governor which have had such irritating results in the recent past. The Committee system, carrying with it executive power, which prevents all initiative as well as responsibility in the cabinet, must go without delay. This, as well as the establishment of an independent Public Service Commission, are the very minimum with which we should be satisfied as a first instalment. In order to ensure such a change it is necessary that the country should be roused to a realisation that it will not be satisfied with anything less as the minimum demand and that it should return to the Council men definitely pledged to obtain these amendments as the only basis for co-operation with government. We cannot begin a new chapter, after the dissolution of the present Council by returning men with that degree of self-complacency promising to do lip service to these national demands, and yet ready and willing to carry on with the same Constitution with which we find ourselves saddled today. In this effort, the youth of the country can play a vital part. Their vision is always unclouded; to them the goal is everything, and the present, with all its apparent advantages, can always be subordinated to the ultimate end. I look to them to give that clean, vigorous and wholesome outlook to the older generation and to point out to us, that greater than all personal glory, there is a higher and nobler ideal to strive for, namely, the political freedom of the country.

There are other directions in which the Congress has to fulfil its mission. I shall briefly touch on one or two of them. Any measure of political freedom cannot avail a nation until and unless that nation has the capacity to appreciate and enjoy the blessings of that freedom. It will be worse than useless to obtain a transfer of political power from the hands of a foreign bureaucracy and concentrate it in the hands of an indigenous oligarchy of intellect. No

democracy in the world has functioned successfully upon a background of ignorance, and it is our duty therefore to see that immediate steps are taken to make primary education both in English and in the Vernaculars free and compulsory all over the country Throughout the vicissitudes of the later centuries the national literature has been either destroyed or neglected; it has certainly remained dormant. Until we are able to re-create this lost heritage of the past, it is necessary, in order to keep abreast of the modern scientific progress of the world, that we should utilize to the fullest the medium through which such knowledge is conveyed to us at present, namely, the English language. We must therefore see that an adequate proportion of the country's revenue is devoted to this most important national need. Sufficient attention has not been paid for [*sic*] the development of technical education One of the arguments often repeated against the further employment of Ceylonese in the various technical posts, particularly in those departments which are under the control of the Ministry of Communications and Works, is that our young men are not possessed of technical knowledge or technical training. The Congress proposes to take up earnestly the question of organising a system of education on scientific and technical lines so that we shall be in a position to harness those wonderful and still undeveloped natural resources of Ceylon. We propose to establish immediately a study circle to supply the necessary information for industrial development; to start local industrial organisations on a co-operative basis, to obtain financial assistance and financial credit on easy terms so that our people may be freed from the economic poverty in which they find themselves today.

The recent epidemic of malaria which is devastating the country-side and which has stricken down already more than a million of its population reminds us forcibly how inadequate have been the measures adopted hitherto to improve the life of the people. In my electorate alone more than a thousand have already died. In one village which adjoins the town of Kegalle there have been 24

deaths in 45 houses. The story of penury and hopelessness and of despair is repeated everywhere in those stricken areas. In the forefront of our programme of work we must place the necessity of carrying on an agitation in the country to eradicate the scourge of malaria. Health exhibitions, lantern lectures, baby shows, the preparation of statistics in the American style with the help of imposing maps and attractive graphs—all these may be very interesting and sometimes even instructive. But we want something more. We want personal service. We want men, particularly the youth of the country, to go in numbers to the fever-striken places. We want them to help us to save human lives; to restore to the sufferers the desire to live, and to raise them from their present state of despondency. We want to create such a public opinion that will not rest satisfied until we shall have rid this land of the pestilence that is destroying the very vitality of the nation that is to be.

After a century of exploitation, we have at last been forcing upon an unwilling government the necessity to give a new orientation to its agricultural policy. Several pieces of heartless legislation, culminating in the most detestable of all, the Waste Lands Ordinances, had completed the work of brigandage. Practically every available portion of the wet zone has been taken away from the hands of its natural and hereditary owners. This degenerate policy has ceased but the work of reconstruction has to be undertaken seriously. We have now the opportunity of creating a class of peasant proprietors. In this work the youth of Ceylon will find a great opportunity. It is important to remember that the present uncultivated areas in the dry zone really represent that portion of the country which was the most thickly populated area in the past. Our ancestors, at a time when they were free from foreign domination, when they were at liberty to select whatever areas they wanted, yet chose to settle down in and to cultivate those tracks which are today known as the dry zone. It was owing to the development of this portion of the country that Ceylon was always able

to count on an abundant food supply. It is here that we still find evidence of the glory and the greatness of our people. The crumbling remains of palaces, of temples, of dwellings and of tanks bear testimony to the high state of that lost civilisation. When the foreign invader came to Ceylon, his first attempt was to destroy the sources of the food supply of the people. The many main channels, sometimes forty miles long, were breached in several places and vast areas suddenly went out of cultivation, and the inhabitants were forced to starve and surrender or leave the locality.

The Congress hopes to give every assistance to this great work of reconstruction so that the smiling fields of Minneriya and the great "Sea of Parakrama" will once more be a reality. Here again the youth of the country can take their just share of service to establish colonists and to help them with the advantages of co-operative enterprise, to build up a new nation on the ruins of the old. What greater service can the youth of the country hope for or live for in the new year?

There is yet another serious obstacle to united political work. The Congress has not yet been able to bring together on the same political platform the various communities living in this island home of ours. There is both fear and suspicion in the minds of the minority communities. To the youth alone must be allotted this task of reconciliation. Their horizon is not limited by caste or creed nor their vision blurred by distinctions of race. In my opinion the youth can render the best contribution to the political progress of the country if they can bring together, on a common platform, the various units of the permanent population of Ceylon and to teach us the value of remorseless discipline and the need for united action.

My last appeal is a personal one. To me there can be no effort worthy of the name unless that effort is supported and sustained by the loyalty and the co-operation of youth. The real task for the new year is the task of

reawakening a public consciousness and a desire for political work. I want to create a great and abiding political enthusiasm in this country. All enthusiasm will be dust and ashes unless it is thrilled [*sic*] with the hope and fervour which youth alone can possess. I want the Congress to make its influence felt in every village and in every home in Ceylon. It is the mission of youth to supply this driving force. Throughout the ages, in the history of every great nation, ancient or modern, youth has been in the vanguard of progress. I want them to bring into the Congress their high ideals, their enthusiasm, their spirit of loyalty and the light of faith that never fades. Here we have an organisation with over a hundred and fifty branches throughout the country, an organisation that has done great and good work in the past, that has stood the test of years, that has the seed of yet greater things in the future. There is room within its ranks for all shades of political opinion.

I appeal to the youth of Ceylon, throbbing with the pulsations of a new life, to make common cause with us, to rouse the Congress from its lethargy, to make it once more a living vital force so that we may be able to say with truth, that our joint contribution, however small or insignificant, has helped this country to march with greater faith, with greater courage, and with greater hope of success along the path of political independence.

E. A. P. Wijeyeratne.

Kegalle, 3.1.35.

(4) *Editorial in the Ceylon Independent*, 16 January 1935: "A Necessary Fund"

The Congress has very wisely decided that it is essential to establish a fund for doing its necessary work. No institution can function satisfactorily when it has no funds for the hundred needs that arise for spending. An important body like the Congress confesses in the most

effective way, its suspension of all normal activities when it declares that it has no funds. The people will subscribe only when they feel that their work is being done on a permanent basis of usefulness. Up to the present time, and for a very large number of years, the Congress had been content to pass resolutions and not act upon them. In this way, the Congress had done very little but talk, and the talk was confined to a few voluble persons. It is being generally realised that a change is essential. The establishment of a fund means that serious business is contemplated. In the circumstances, people all over the country will be glad to give what is determined upon as a reasonable subscription. The people must give if they expect their work to be done in the way in which it should be done. This is a matter of simple common sense. We feel sure that once it is realised that the Congress means business, money will readily flow into its coffers.

The Congress ought to be amenable to suggestions from the outstations too. All those who belong to Congress, even the humblest member, should feel that he has a stake in the success of this institution. The Congress under the new President is showing a willingness to do a great work for the country. It is inevitable that the country should respond. The times are ripe for action. The effects of the depression are wearing out and there are definite signs of prosperity. The malaria epidemic will perhaps be soon over but then the work of reconstruction will take a long time, and there will be a very pressing need for social service which should take precedence over every form of political activity. The necessity for political reforms is understood all over the country but a correct and sympathetic political temper prevails. It is not hard to convince the people that their most urgent need is economic reconstruction and that political advantages will be of value not only in themselves, but also as a means of general prosperity. Even for good work in the political sphere, it is necessary that Congress should have large funds which would place it in a

position to undertake all the activities that legitimately belong to it without waiting for chance donations from people who are bound to be exacting for what little they do.

A good example of what should be done by Congress can be seen in the Indian National Congress. The Indian National Congress had two very practical items on its programme when it started its activities. In the first place the Congress felt that it would be lacking in strength and power unless it could have behind it the masses. This object was steadily pursued. Every Indian, however poor he was, felt that national work could not be carried on without him. He therefore believed that he should do all in his power to aid a cause which stood for his own political emancipation. It was inevitable that in this frame of mind he should without any effort realise his obligation to give something to an institution which existed entirely for his benefit. In this way, the Congress came into real power. It did not threaten to act and then subside with a gentle forbearance. It declared its intention to act and then acted with firmness, vigour and courage. It had the sinews of war, and war could therefore be carried out on the political battlefront. Not only the poor but the rich also gave, and the history of the Indian National Congress is therefore the story of a great and unique success. We hope that the Ceylon National Congress will place its work on a permanently practical and progressive basis by the establishment of its own funds, drawn for [*sic*] all conditions of people and from all parts of the country.

28. SPECIAL SESSIONS, 28 SEPTEMBER 1935

28 : A. Minutes of the Sessions

A summary of the proceedings of a special sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held on Saturday the 28th September, 1935, at the Ananda College Hall, Maradana at 1.30 p.m. to consider the policy and programme of work formulated by the Executive Committee of the Congress.

Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, the President, presided and extended a welcome to the delegates.

Sir Baron Jayatilaka proposed the following resolution:

> The National Congress accepts the Policy and Programme of Work formulated by its Executive Committee.

Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, seconding the resolution, detailed the policy and programme and said that if they accepted it and worked it honestly and unitedly, they would hasten the day when Ceylon would enjoy full responsible government.

Mr. Victor C. Perera moved as an amendment :

> That the Congress empowers the Executive Committee to nominate candidates for the forthcoming General Election of the State Council.

Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya seconded the amendment. Mr. Geo. E. de Silva spoke in support.

At this stage an adjournment was made for tea and on resumption the Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake, Messrs. D. Alagiyawanna, Roland E. W. Perera, D. G. Weerasinghe, W. R. Wijemanne, G. H. Albert Perera, S. P. A. de Silva, G. K. W. Perera, Justin Perera, D. S. Senaratne, P. H. Peiris and Sir Baron Jayatilaka spoke against the amendment.

Mr. Victor C. Perera expressed his wish to withdraw the amendment, but his seconder Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya would not agree.

The amendment was thus put to the vote and declared lost, only 11 voting for it.

The original motion was put to the house and carried by a large majority.

The President, after thanking the delegates for their presence in such large numbers and the interest they had evinced in the discussion, declared the session closed.

E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, 25.10.35. — P. D. S. Jayasekera, Hony. Jt. Secretary.

28 : B. Draft Report on the Sessions [1]

A special appeal for unity and an exhortation to the Sinhalese majority in the State Council to use their powers with restraint for the good of the whole country rather than for sectional interests was made by Sir Baron Jayatilaka at Saturday's special sessions of the Ceylon National Congress, with the President, Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, in the chair. It was called for the purpose of considering the policy and programme of work formulated by its Executive Committee.

In the course of his speech Sir Baron Jayatilaka drew attention to the fact that Donoughmore Commissioners had expected the three Officers of State to function in an advisory capacity to the untried and inexperienced Ministers in carrying out their duties. The character of these three

1. Derived from a handwritten manuscript (C.N.A., 60/116). The report appeared in the *CDN*, 30 September 1935, with the following headlines as supplied by the draft:
Minister's Appeal For Unity
National Congress Attitude To Reforms Re-stated
Officers of State
Donoughmore Commissioner Surprised at Nature of Their Duties.

Officers had now changed. Dr. Drummond Shiels, one of the members of the Commission, he said, had expressed his *surprise to him at this development and at their* appointment as members of the Public Service Commission.

What Has Been Achieved

Sir Baron Jayatilaka moved the following motion:

> That the National Congress accepts the policy and programme of work formulated by its Executive Committee.

In doing so he said that he was glad to see so large a gathering present which was an indication, so far as he could see, of the resuscitation of the Ceylon National Congress. It was true that in the past few years the Congress had lost its influence somewhat, but the large number of delegates present showed that new life had been infused He hoped that the Congress would go from strength to strength and rise to the position which it held ten or fifteen years ago. He had no doubt that the Congress, through its efforts, had done a great deal for the political progress of the country.

Their Achievement

Speaking of what had been achieved under the present Constitution, Sir Baron recalled the early opposition to its acceptance. He and some others felt it would be a pity not to accept it, not because they were not conscious of its defects but because it had some goods points as well. They also felt that it was only a Labour Government which would have made such an offer and they did not want to loose that opportunity. They therefore decided to give the new Constitution a trial despite its defects.

Those who had observed the working of the State Council during the last four years would say that the acceptance of the Constitution had done no harm to the country. He for one would say that the working of the Constitution was beneficial to the country.

Relief Works

What had been done by the State Council during the malaria epidemic was an instance of the good that accrued. Could anyone imagine that the Government that existed before 1931 would have released five million rupees for relief work ? He did not believe that the head of the Medical Department would have received a fraction of that sum if he applied.

He himself would bear testimony to the excellent work done by the Members of Council during the epidemic.

It was true that they did not have complete responsible government yet, but during the last four years they had made every endeavour to remedy the defects.

The question had been discussed in Council and the Board of Ministers had forwarded two memoranda addressed to the Governor and a proposal was made to send a deputation to the Secretary of State. But they were informed that a deputation would not be received.

Two Interviews

On his recent visit to England he tried to get the closed door opened and he was glad to say that he did succeed. He did not go as a delegate of any deputation, neither on a mandate from any Body. But he was able to interview the Secretary of State with whom he spent three hours on two occasions and detailed exhaustively the work done by the Council during the four years. Everything was clearly explained and the Secretary of State gave him a patient and cordial hearing. The Secretary of State had told him that he would give his careful consideration to the points raised by him and that he would discuss the matter with the Governor who was now in England.

Four Points

In regard to the political situation, Sir Baron said that there were four important points emphasised in the memorandum of the Executive Committee of the Congress now before them.

In his opinion the most important requirement was the removal of the three Officers of State, who were not responsible to the State Council. If the three Officers were to become responsible Ministers then they would have full responsible government.

The successful manner in which they had worked the Constitution, notwithstanding its defects, entitled them to a further advance.

Besides the defects of the Constitution they had other difficulties in their way—financial difficulties. When the present Constitution began to function they were burdened with a deficit amounting to Rs. 21,000,000, but at the end of the last financial year he was glad to say that they had a surplus balance of Rs. 27,000,000. Many other countries which began with a deficit during the depression period had not been able to balance their budget, much less to leave a surplus balance.

Further, the three Officers of State, he said, were expected by the Commissioners to advise and assist the untried and inexperienced Ministers in carrying out their duties, but the character of these Officers had now changed.

Remedying Defects

Anyway during the last four years they had done considerable good, but they must try their utmost to remedy the defects in the Constitution, which at present was worked by Executive Committees and the Board of Ministers. No one seemed to be responsible to the government.

When in England he had the opportunity of discussing the situation with Dr. Drummond Shiels, a member of the Donoughmore Commission, the latter expressed surprise at the present situation with regard to the three Officers of State. He was also surprised that the three Officers of State had been constituted the Public Service Commission.

Cabinet Responsibility

Although the Board of Ministers was said to be responsible for the budget, it must be said that each Ministry placed its requirements before the Board which could only say whether the funds could be found or not.

There ought to be a responsible Ministry and what was wanted was the creation of a Cabinet responsibility. Today Ministers were elected sometimes by Committees by chance or fluke, by a majority of one very often.

Another matter was that the powers of the Governor should be restricted. He did not think it was so important once a wholly responsible Board of Ministers, with the three Officers of State being replaced by elected Ministers, is [*sic*] elected. It would be on a par with the British Cabinet which advised the King who always acted on such advice. The King possessed vast powers, but seldom had any been used for the last hundred years.

Standard of Living

With full responsible government for Ceylon much could be done for the welfare of the country. It was well known that the majority of the country were poor. It was not more political gain that they should strive after. They should try to obtain more power to raise the standard of living of the people. In the village districts during the recent malaria epidemic it was the lack of nutrition and inability to resist the attack of malaria that carried away thousands.

He was glad to say that the Minister of Agriculture and Lands and his Executive Committee had done their best to improve the agriculture of their country. In the olden days Kings of Ceylon were noted for two things, the extension and improvement of agriculture and the promotion of religion. They were now attempting the improvement of agriculture by the extension of irrigation and the provision of tanks and reservoirs for the storage of rain water. He was told that the Department of Irrigation was working at the problem.

It was not only the cultivation of food products that helped but the marketing of the produce. He was glad that a Marketing Department had been started and he felt sure there was much work still to be done to help the village producer.

Way to Salvation

The time had come for them to consider seriously the economic situation of the country. It was true this country was an agricultural country, but they should not hold long to that boat. Agriculture alone did not develop wealth in a country. Nowhere in the world was it so While cultivating food for home consumption, they should try to export something out of the country in order to obtain wealth.

In Switzerland, which is a small country, they did not depend on agriculture alone but exported produce and accumulated wealth.

As one travelled in Switzerland now, one saw not only corn fields and pasture lands on which herds of cattle grazed, but also factories. It was time that the people of Ceylon realized that agriculture alone could not make them a wealthy people. They could make a beginning by manufacturing at least some of the articles imported to the country and thus retaining at least a part of the money which normally flowed outside.

Two Difficulties

Sir Baron thought that there were two difficulties in the way of commercial and industrial development of the country. The first was financial. Individuals who had the money were not willing to join societies or limited liability companies. The second difficulty was that they had no men with technical knowledge. He urged that young Ceylonese should be given technical teaching at the expense of government.

In conclusion he referred to the enemies abroad who spread false stories about the people of this country to mislead the people of England.

When he was in England he went on a visit to a friend in Leicester where he was shown a book entitled "Britain's Folly: The Ceylon Experiment" which contained passages of speeches made by Members of the State Council criticising the British. These were magnified and the people in England were misled. The foreword was by Lord Rothermere.

The contents of this book were over hundred times worse than the allegations made by Sir Henry Page-Croft. He warned people here not to make irresponsible statements which would be only adding to the armoury of weapons used against the political aspirations of the people of this country.

Welfare of All

He urged that the policy and programme formulated by the Executive Committee of Congress should be studied and furthered throughout the country.

Sir Baron made a special appeal for unity in Ceylon. Those present there and in the Council must remember that there was a Sinhalese majority in the Council and that in the Sinhalese majority, there was a Buddhist majority. They should therefore be restrained and not use their political power for sectional purposes but for the welfare of the whole country.

Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, seconding the motion, detailed the policy and programme and said that if they accepted it and worked it honestly and unitedly, they would hasten the day when Ceylon would enjoy full responsible government.

An Amendment

Mr. Victor C. Perera moved an amendment: "that Congress empowers the Executive Committee to appoint a Nomination Board of five members of the Executive Committee to nominate candidates for the forthcoming general elections."

In doing so he said that he was proposing it in the firm belief that its adoption would enable Congress to rehabilitate itself in the eyes of the country. How was it, he asked, that Congress had today lost the commanding position that it had in the national life of the country ? The answer was that Congress had been too prone to compromise, and to shirk its duty in great national crisis, owing to the fear that it might offend a few individuals of the community. The time had come for adopting a bold and forward policy and to abandon the policy of vacillation and compromise which had been the bane of Congress.

If one of the main objects of Congress was to obtain full parliamentary government, then surely they must organise themselves as a party without delay, not only in the State Council but in the country too.

Tail of Elephant

Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya seconded. Mr. Geo. E. de Silva spoke in support.

At this stage the adjournment was made for tea and on resumption speeches were made by Messrs. D. M. Alagiyawanna (Veyangoda), Roland E. W. Perera (Moratuwa), W. R. Wijemanne (Panadura), D. G. Weerasinghe (Chilaw), G. K. W. Perera (Matara), Justin Perera (Rambukkana), Albert Perera (Colombo Central Electorate), S. P. A. de Silva (Matara), D. P. Senaratne (Matale) and P. H. Peiris (Dodanduwa).

Mr. D. S. Senanayake *spoke in support of the motion and* condemned the amendment as unnecessary and mischievous.

Sir Baron Jayatilaka regretted that they had spent so much time in discussing the amendment and not the program formulated by their Executive Committee. Instead of describing the elephant itself, they had described its tail.

The amendment was irrelevant and was a "red herring trailed across." They should not be misled by it. Even if it were accepted by the two hundred odd delegates present,

could they say that the whole country accepted it ? It was their duty to educate every voter on the policy and program of the Congress. He would advise them to vote against the amendment which was useless and dangerous.

Amendment Lost

Mr. Victor C. Perera expressed his wish to withdraw the amendment. His seconder Mr. Amarasuriya would not agree. So it was put to the meeting and only 11 voted for it.

The original motion was put to the meeting and carried by a large majority.

The meeting then terminated.

C. Appendix to the Special Sessions in 1935

(1) "Ceylon Daily News" Editorial, 30 September 1935: "Unity and Reform"

The special sessions of the Ceylon National Congress on Saturday admirably served the purpose of providing Sir Baron Jayatilaka with an opportunity to make a public statement on the political situation with especial reference to the particular directions in which reforms are needed and the prospect of obtaining them. It is clear that the Leader of the State Council, although he went to England primarily as a delegate to the Empire Parliamentary Association, spared no pains to explain to the Colonial Office authorities and other quarters the difficulties the Ministers had experienced in working the Constitution. According to him Dr. Drummond Shiels, who as a member of the Donoughmore Commission was partly responsible for our present system of government, was surprised to hear that the Ministers had not received the co-operation and assistance the three Officers of State were expected to give them. It may fairly be assumed from the trend of Sir Baron Jayatilaka's remarks in this connection that the chief measures of reform he advocated in his two interviews with the Secretary of State consisted of the replacement of the

Officers of State by responsible elected Ministers, the creation of a sense of Cabinet responsibility by some better method of electing Ministers, who at present evolve almost by fluke, and the curtailment of the Governor's overriding powers.

The fact that these drawbacks in the Constitution were pointed out from the very beginning does not weaken the effect of the case now made out for their removal by those who were too ready to close their eyes to the drawbacks No one is more competent than the Leader of the Council and his colleagues, who accepted the Constitution as workable, to declare that it is quite impossible to work it as it is in the true spirit of popular government. A Constitution that leads to frequent crises and gives rise to friction and misunderstandings cannot be regarded as a good Constitution. It is only too well known that the sort of dyarchy inherent in the existence of official Ministers called Officers of State side by side with elected Ministers is the root cause of much of the misunderstanding and friction. One of the essential steps, therefore, in the creation of a sense of collective Cabinet responsibility is the vesting in elected Ministers of the departments now administered by the Officers of State. The other essential step is the remodelling of the Committee System, if that system is to remain, in order that there may be nothing flukey in the election or appointment of Ministers, and also that the Ministers may stand or fall together on all matters of policy. It is ridiculous to talk of responsible government by a Ministry whose members could be mutually responsible and have, in fact, to dance to the behests of perhaps four committee men.

These difficulties have been before the country as well as the authorities both here and in England for some time, and it is doubtful whether the Ceylon National Congress could do very much to help in overcoming them. Sir Baron Jayatilaka himself was provoked to exclaim that Congress members confronted with an elephant are lost in contemplation of the hairs upon its tail. Such a mentality is not likely to avail much in securing the reform of the Constitution.

The Congress is perfectly entitled to rally it ranks on the eve of the General Election and impress its supporters with a high-sounding program. But the country must look for its salvation to itself rather than to any particular body of men, and that is why the most important passage in Sir Baron Jayatilaka's speech was his appeal for unity. If the country is united and public opinion is organised, a strong campaign could be waged for constitutional reform that is bound to produce results. One of the chief reasons why the representations so far made for the removal of existing defects in the Order-in-Council of 1931 have been cold-shouldered is that they do not appear to have the backing of public opinion. The people of Ceylon must demonstrate in unmistakable fashion that they are whole-heartedly in support of the demand for reform along the lines indicated and that that demand is a minimum one. To make such a demonstration, unity and the mobilising of public opinion on the constitutional issue are necessary and to achieve this nobody could do more than Sir Baron Jayatilaka himself.

29. SEVENTEENTH ANNUAL SESSIONS, 21 DECEMBER 1935

29 : A. AGENDA : RESOLUTIONS[1]

Mahinda College Hall, Galle. 2 p.m.

1. The Donoughmore Constitution having been given a fair trial, the Ceylon National Congress demands the immediate amendment of the said Constitution in the following respects:

   (a) The removal of the Officers of State,
   (b) The control of the Finances and the Public Services,
   (c) The restriction of the powers of the Governor,
   (d) The creation of Cabinet responsibility,
   (e) Increase in the number of seats in the State Council from 50 to 60.

2. This Congress views with alarm the extent of unemployment prevalent in this country and requests Government to appoint a Commission to consider the question of restricting immigration and further to investigate the causes that have contributed to such unemployment.

3. This Congress is of opinion that a reform of the headmen system is urgently necessary in the interests of the country and requests Government to accept the principles contained in the report of the Headmen Commission and to give effect to its recommendations.

4. This Congress requests Government to secure the services of an expert to advise and organise the system of Local Government in Ceylon as recommended by the Donoughmore Commissioners.

5. That Article II of the Constitution of the Congress be amended by the substitution of 25 for 15 elected members[2].

1. From C. N. A., 60/16.
2. This motion was not presented at the

6. This Congress is of opinion that a scheme of rural development is urgently necessary for the uplift of the masses of the country and requests Government to formulate and give effect to such a scheme.

7. The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that steps be taken by the Executive Committee for the creation of a National Fund.

P. D. S. Jayasekera,
P. H. A. Silva,
Hony. Secretaries
Ceylon National Congress.

21 December, 1935.

29 : B. Minutes of the Sessions

A summary of the proceedings of the seventeenth annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held on Saturday the 21st December 1935 at the Mahinda College Hall, Galle at 2 p.m.

The delegates arrived by the noon train and were conducted in procession along a beflagged route to Mahinda College Hostel where they were entertained to lunch.

At 2 p.m. the delegates and others assembled in the Mahinda College hall where the session began, Mr. N. de Alwis, Chairman of the Reception Committee, welcomed the delegates and invited Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya, the new President, to take the chair.

The President moved a vote of condolence on the death of Sir Marcus Fernando. The vote was passed in the usual manner.

The President then delivered his presidential address.

Mr. R. S. S. Gunewardene moved the first resolution on the agenda:

The Donoughmore Constitution having been given a fair trial, the Ceylon National Congress demands the immediate amendment of the said Constitution in the following respects:

(a) The removal of the Officers of State,
(b) The control of the Finances and the Public Services,
(c) The restriction of the powers of the Governor,
(d) The creation of Cabinet responsibility,
(e) Increase in the number of seats in the State Council from 50 to 65.

Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa seconded. Sir D. B. Jayatilaka supported. Carried unanimously.

Mr. P. H. A. Silva moved the following resolution:

This Congress views with alarm the extent of unemployment prevalent in this country and requests Government to appoint a Commission to consider the question of restricting immigration and further to investigate the causes that have contributed to such unemployment.

Mr. J. P. Seneviratne seconded and Mr. R. P. G. de Silva supported the resolution which was carried.

Mr. D. Peter Perera moved the following resolution:

This Congress is of opinion that a reform of the Headmen System is urgently necessary in the interests of the country and requests Government to accept the principles contained in the report of the Headmen Commission and to give effect to its recommendations.

Mr. G. P. Samarawickrema seconded the resolution. Messrs. G. A. Gunatilaka and J. J. de Mel opposed. The resolution was put to the vote and carried.

At this stage the proceedings were ad the delegates and the visitors were entertai

On resumption Mr. W. E. Wijemanne moved the resolution:

This Congress requests Government to secure the services of an expert to advise and organise the system of Local Government in Ceylon as recommended by the Donoughmore Commissioners.

Mr. D. Alagiyawanna seconded and Mr. G. K. W. Perera supported the resolution which was carried.

Mr. D. M. S. Kaviraja moved and Mr. C. D. A. Gunawardene seconded the following resolution:

This Congress is of opinion that a scheme of rural development is urgently necessary for the uplift of the masses of the country and requests Government to formulate and give effect to such a scheme.

Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike supported the same. The resolution was carried.

Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara moved the following resolution:

The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that steps be taken by the Executive Committee for the creation of a National Fund.

Mr. D. R. Jayawardene seconded. Mr. D. S. Gunasekera supported the same. Carried unanimously.

On the motion of Mr. P. D. S. Jayasekera seconded by Mr. P. H. A. Silva the following were elected members of the Executive Committee of the Congress: [Here follows a list which has been reproduced on pp. 45-46].

The President, after thanking the delegates for their presence and the interest they had taken in the discussions declared the sessions closed.

29: C. Draft Report on the Sessions[1]

An appeal to the young men of this country to sink differences and rise above race, colour, cree.l and cast work for the common good of their mother-land was m by the President of the National Congress, Mr. H. W. A rasuriya, in his address from the chair at the seventee annual sessions of the Congress held in Mahinda Colle Galle on the 23rd December. Mr. Amarasuriya also ou lined the constitutional reforms which the Congress soug to secure: restrictions of the Governor's reserve power the removal of the Officers of State from the State Counci and a larger control of Public Services and the country's finances for the elected representatives of the people.

Sir Baron Jayatilaka, in supporting the resolution, said that what they wanted was responsible government when the Governor would not use his powers without the consent of the Ministers. He quoted the case of His Majesty the King who never used such powers without the consent of the Cabinet.

Communalists Refuted

The delegates arrived by the noon train and were conducted in procession along a beflagged road to Mahinda College hostel where they were entertained to lunch. At 2 p.m. the delegates assembled in the Olcott Hall where the session began. Mr. N. de Alwis, Chairman of the Reception Committee, welcomed the delegates. After tracing the history of the Congress, Mr. de Alwis said that the Congress still stood for the same old principles which guided the founders of the Congress. He then invited Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya to take the chair.

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1. C. N. A., 60/95 and 91.
While the report is handwritten the presidential address is typewritten and appears in full. See the *CDN*, 23 December 1935, for the report under the following captions as supplied by the draft:
National Congress Demands
Need for Responsible Government
Appeal To Youth To Rally To The Cause,

Mr. Amarasuriya then took the chair. Others on the platform were ; Sir D. B. Jayatilaka, Messrs. C. W. W. Kannangara, E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, G. C. S. Corea, S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, G. K. W. Perera, J. N. Jinendradasa. R. S. S. Gunewardene, D. R. Jayawardene and the Secretaries, Messrs. P. D. S. Jayasekera and P. H. A. Silva.

Vote of Condolence

The Chairman moved a vote of condolence on the death of Sir Marcus Fernando. In doing so, he said that even though Sir Marcus had not been closely connected with the National Congress he was a leading public man and was one of the most brilliant men Ceylon had produced. The vote was passed in the usual manner. The Chairman then delivered his address.

Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya's Presidential Address [1]

Fellow Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen—I feel it my first duty to associate myself with the cordial welcome which the Chairman of the Reception Committee has extended to you. I thank you for assembling here in such large numbers, many from distant parts of the Island and all, without any doubt, at considerable personal inconvenience.

To preside over an assembly of this importance is indeed a proud privilege and that privilege has fallen to my lot this year. I must thank you from the bottom of my heart and express my sincere appreciation for the high honour you have conferred upon me by electing me your President this year at a momentous period of the political history of our beautiful Island. I am fully conscious of the responsibilities and the irksome duties that I may be called upon to shoulder as your President. It is with a great deal of diffidence and reluctance that I have accepted this high office. I feel it all the more when I ponder for a while and consider the achievements of those illustrious men who have

1. The *CDN* report is much more concise than the typewritten manuscript we have followed. Several paragraphs have been omitted. The paragraphs printed, however, largely reproduce Amarasuriya's text verbatim.

occupied this chair before. They were men held in high esteem by all sections of the people and were hailed as the *Political Giants of this country.*

At the same time I feel confident of the goodwill, co-operation and the sympathy of my countrymen in the performance of the responsible task before me. I am equally confident that I can count on the hearty support and the loyal co-operation of all my fellow delegates and the associations they represent. That will, I expect, considerably lighten my task and help me to make the record of the forthcoming year's work compare favourably with the achievements of my predecessors in office.

For the past several years it has been my privilege to take a keen and enthusiastic interest in the affairs of the Congress. And during the years of vicissitudes, during its triumphs and its varied career, it has been my firm belief that the Ceylon National Congress was the one Political Institution that afforded the greatest opportunity to every section of the people inhabiting this Island, irrespective of race, caste, creed or colour, to the old as well as the young, to work together harmoniously and stand together for the common purpose of obtaining our political emancipation.

I therefore consider that in electing me to the chair you have confidence in the youth of the country and that you believe that the future is in the hands of the younger generation.

The elder statemen have done yeoman service to the country and have guided the destinies of the Congress with judicious caution and their loyalty to the cause and persistent agitation have kept alive the demand for Political Reform. Some of these stalwarts still continue to render unselfish and devotional service to the country. That is all the more reason why the younger generation should take their rightful place and assist the country in the solution of the great problems of the country which still remain unsolved.

Mr. Amarasuriya then took the chair. Others on the platform were ; Sir D. B. Jayatilaka, Messrs. C. W. W. Kannangara, E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, G. C. S. Corea, S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, G. K. W. Perera, J. N. Jinendradasa. R. S. S. Gunewardene, D. R. Jayawardene and the Secretaries, Messrs. P. D. S. Jayasekera and P. H. A. Silva.

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The elder statemen have done yeoman service to the country and have guided the destinies of the Congress with judicious caution and their loyalty to the cause and persistent agitation have kept alive the demand for Political Reform. Some of these stalwarts still continue to render unselfish and devotional service to the country. That is all the more reason why the younger generation should take their rightful place and assist the country in the solution of the great problems of the country which still remain unsolved.

Fellow Delegates we have met here this afternoon in this historic town of Galle, which is dear to the hearts of Ruhuna's sons, to inaugurate the 17th year of the existence of the Ceylon National Congress. I do not therefore propose to take your minds back to the early history of the political progress made during the last twenty five years and more. There were times when the highest ambition of the old school of politicians was to secure an unofficial nominated majority and the yet later times when an unofficial elected majority in the Legislative Council would have satisfied those leaders of political thought.

Today we have reaped the results of the struggles of those earlier years and I make bold to state that in the evolution of our political freedom the Ceylon National Congress has always been the main driving force. The transition from a representative government to even a vestige of responsible government was brought about by the acceptance of the Donoughmore Constitution by this country. The Ceylon National Congress played no small part in exerting its influence towards this end.

At a special session held at the Ananda College on the 10th September, 1928 to consider the report of the Donoughmore Commission under the chairmanship of Dr. W. A. de Silva, the then President, a resolution to the following effect was adopted :

> That this Congress while expressing its grave disappointment that the Special Commission has not found it possible to recommend a scheme of full responsible government and while re-affirming its demand for the same, is prepared to accept for the present the recommendation of the Donoughmore Commission subject to such modifications as may be adopted in the subsequent resolutions.

The above resolution, which was moved by Mr. Francis de Zoysa, K. C., and seconded by Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, was unanimously carried.

In the following resolutions the Ceylon National Congress demanded among other things:

(a) the elimination of the Committee system.

(b) the restriction of the wide and comprehensive power of the Governor.

(c) the right to the State Council to control the public service in regard to all matters effecting the pay, allowances, pensions, prospects, and conditions of service.

It was generally felt among all sections of the community that the large powers granted to the country under the proposed new scheme conferred no real power in view of the safeguards that were recommended by the increase of the Governor's powers, [and] the removal of the full and effective control of the public service.

Opinion was divided in the country as to the advisability of the acceptance of the Donoughmore Constitution and after all sections of the country had expressed their views on the new reforms, the despatches of Sir Herbert Stanley, the Governor of Ceylon, and of Lord Passfield, the then Secretary of State for the Colonies, were published and it was generally known that his point of view was that the Donoughmore scheme should be accepted or rejected in toto without any alteration to its principal features. In his despatch Sir Herbert Stanley while admitting the difficulties of the Constitution made it clear that it was an experiment and said "I would not guarantee success, but I consider that with a spirit of mutual goodwill and co-operation among those principally concerned the system should be capable of successful working and that its advantages, in the event of its successful working, would be such that, even at some risk of the possible failure it should be given a trial." He also gave an assurance that it was not the intention to deprive the State Council of the right to discuss all matters affecting the public service. He further stated that an eventual failure of a genuine attempt to overcome the difficulties

in the working of the Constitution would not necessarily imply unfitness for self-government. It was in these circumstances that the Ceylon National Congress reconsidered its previous decision and at a special session held for that purpose decided to accept the new Constitution and give it a fair trial.

The then Legislative Council too by a majority of two votes passed a resolution accepting the Reforms. The Ceylon (State Council) Order-in-Council was then issued and the new State Council was inaugurated in July, 1931.

As the first State Council of Ceylon, having given the Constitution a fair trial during the last four and half years [has] come to its dissolution only so recently as the 7th instant, it would not be quite out of place to examine its working in some aspects, at least, as briefly as possible:

(*a*) The frequent and uncalled for use by the Governor of his reserve power to certify measures rejected by the State Council has greatly impaired the working of the Constitution. Under Article 22 of the Order-in-Council the Governor has the right to certify any measure if it is of paramount importance or necessary to give effect to the provisions of the Order-in-Council.

In vesting this power in the Governor, the Donoughmore Commission contemplated that few matters can in themselves be reasonably described as of paramount importance, and that all that was necessary was that the supervisory power of the Governor should be strengthened.

But to our surprise during the last four and half years we have observed that the Governor in season and out of season has resorted to the use of his powers to certify matters which could hardly be described as coming within the term "Paramount Importance."

I do not propose to enumerate the many instances on which the Governor's reserve powers were used. But I would like to make pointed reference to a few of the more important events:

(a) Free leave passages.

(b) Allowances and method of payment of Commuted Pensions.

(c) The alteration of the pension minute.

(d) The amendment of the Income Tax Ordinance.

(e) The Public Service Salaries levy.

(f) The increase of Cadre of Services.

The Congress feels strongly that the powers of the Governor should be more supervisory than executive and is of the considered opinion that the Constitution should be so amended as to curtail and restrict the special powers vested in the Governor. Some of the instances I have quoted cannot by any stretch of imagination be interpreted to be matters of "Paramount Importance to the Public Interest." The Donoughmore Commissioners in their report on page 72 state:

> The position of the Governor must be consistent with the type of constitution which we contemplate. If the new constitution is effectively to transfer to the elected representatives a large measure of responsibility the retention unaltered of the Governor's powers would be inappropriate; if on the other hand the constitution will not be equivalent to the grant of full responsible government it would be illogical to place the Governor in the position of the constitutional head of such a Government. The change then in the position of the Governor must accord with the degree to which responsibility is to be transferred and his executive powers must be diminished in direct ratio to the advance made towards responsible Government.

This clearly indicates what was in the mind of the Commission in regard to the powers conferred upon the Governor.

I now pass on to the position of the three Officers of State They form a sort of inner cabinet and are responsible only

to the Governor and not to the Legislature. They were given a place in the new scheme to enable them to give advice and guidance to the elected Ministers and the Council generally. Their presence was considered essential at a transitional stage of the devolution of power on [*sic*] the elected Ministers, owing to their lack of experience in matters pertaining to administration. Instead of acting in an advisory capacity they have asserted themselves and have often obstructed the work of those departments in charge of elected Ministers. We therefore demand the removal of the Officers of State and the vesting of their functions and duties in elected Ministers.

The Control of *Finances* and the *Public* Services: *Considerable* difficulty has been experienced, during the last four years and more, in the working of the present Constitution in matters relating to the public services. The Constitution has cast the duty of providing the necessary funds for the payment of public servants upon the Board of Ministers and the State Council. But there have been many instances where financial burdens have been imposed on the country without any authority from the Council or even a consultation with the Board of Ministers. The Ministers who are responsible for the proper and smooth working of the departments entrusted to their charge have no disciplinary control over their officers. Their control is left entirely in the hands of the three Officers of State who constitute the Public Services Commission. This state of affairs is far from satisfactory and have [*sic*] resulted in creating [*sic*] serious embarrassment. Instances of disloyalty in the carrying out of directions issued to them by the Ministers have occurred. The Congress demands that the present constitution of the Public Services Commission be altered and that an independent and non-official Public Services Commission be established. The Legislature should at the same time have the unhampered right to formulate the general policy in regard to their prospects of service and make necessary adjustments in accordance with the capacity to pay and the national requirements of the country.

The present form of control of departments by Executive Committees of the Council, although possessing certain advantages, have shown that it lends itself to grave defects which may be summarised as follows:

(a) Delays in administration as the Committee has to be consulted in all matters and it entails considerable delay in the transaction of business. A single Minister in charge of departments will show more initiative and greater independence.

(b) The difficulty in the co-relation of the policies of the different Ministers have [sic] resulted in the absence of a comprehensive policy on the part of the Board of Ministers.

(c) The tendency to exercise powers under Article 45 of the Order-in-Council and the possibility to give effect to important matters over the head of the State Council. The Congress therefore recommends and urges the abolition of the Committee System of Government and the substitution of the same by a parliamentary system of Government with full Cabinet responsibility. The chief aim of Congress is to work towards the achievement of these essential amendments to the present constitution.

I can do no better than commend to you the first article of the Congress which is its fundamental creed.

> The aim of the Ceylon National Congress is to secure for the people of Ceylon responsible Government and the status of a self-governing member of the British Empire. This end is to be achieved by constitutional methods by a reform of the existing system of Government and administration, by a vigorous development of self-governing institutions and by organizing and fostering the intellectual, moral and economic resources of the country.

I feel strongly that we should re-affirm our faith and loyalty to the creed of the Congress and translate the high ideals underlying it into action. We shall endeavour to the best of our ability to work towards this goal irrespective of colour, creed or caste by galvanizing all possible forces

and enthusiasm at our command without having any mental or other reservations. Economic independence is as important as political independence and the policy of the Congress will be directed towards the realization of this important factor in the development of our national interests.

Events during the last few years clearly indicate two things :

1. That our political development has now reached a point at which unless we are watchful and march ahead, a wrong turning may easily create a set-back.

2. That reactionary forces in our midst are taking full advantage of the present agitation for reforms in an attempt to block the path that leads to the goal of Swaraj. Our friends from the North have accused us of unredeemed pledges and broken pacts. I wish to tell them that it is now too late in the day to reconsider the question of an adequate ratio in the distribution of seats and further we entirely disagree that any such ratio is necessary.

I believe representations were duly made to the proper quarters when the Donoughmore Commissioners visited Ceylon and made their investigations. After full enquiry they came to the definite conclusion that the distribution of seats should be on a purely territorial basis and the communal representations should be abolished altogether. They further state :

> In surveying the situation in Ceylon we have come hesitatingly to the conclusion that communal representation is, as it were, a canker on the body politic eating deeper and deeper into the vital energies of the people, breeding self-interest, suspicion and animosity, poisoning the new growth of political consciousness and effectively preventing the development of a national co-operative spirit.

I appeal to our brethren from the North to sink whatever differences and feelings they have towards the majority community and work harmoniously for the common cause which we have all cherished from the very inception of the Congress. The Tamil Community was a tower of strength to the Congress cause for many years. I extend a cordial invitation to the leaders of the Tamil Community to come back to our fold and again work together. I feel confident that my appeal which I make with all [the] sincerity at my command will not fall on deaf years. The Congress recommends an increase in the number of seats in the State Council from 50 to 65 as originally recommended by the Donoughmore Commissioners to ensure the Minority Communities better opportunities of representation and a more even redistribution of seats.

The policy and the programme of the Congress and the principles which underlie them have been fully and eloquently expounded from time to time by those who graced this chair before. My task has been made lighter as "A policy and programme for the Ceylon National Congress," was formulated by the Executive Committee of Congress and was adopted at a special session held on 28th September this year. I have been obliged to refer rather exhaustively to this important question of the Reform of the Constitution. It is a subject of paramount importance to us as no country or nation can progress without a liberal form of government. At the same time let us bear in mind that constitutional reform is after all a means to an end; the end being prosperity and the welfare of community. This progress and welfare of a nation depends to a large extent on the good government of a country. It is therefore proper that every right-minded person in this country should not rest contended [sic] until we can secure for Ceylon a better and more advanced form of democratic government. But while we are endeavouring on the one hand to secure a reform of the Constitution, it is our bounden duty to work for the general good of the people so far as present opportunities are afforded by the Constitution within its limitations.

Many important problems, which affect the food supply, health and education require the immediate attention of the government. These are domestic matters and those responsible for the good government of this country should address themselves seriously to a solution of these problems, difficulties of which seem to be growing in intensity and complexity every year. The happiness and prosperity of a country depends mainly on an adequate food supply. For centuries past Ceylon was rightly known as the "Granary of the East." But it seems paradoxical that today we are obliged to import rice from India to the value of nearly 50 Million Rupees. But thanks to the energetic Minister for Agriculture and Lands and his Committee who have pursued a forward policy in this direction, we can hope to regain our long lost reputation and be in a happy position to meet all our internal requirements for home consumption within a reasonable time. It will be indeed a consummation devoutly to be wished for!

The primary industry of this Island is Agriculture and every possible encouragement should be given to the fostering of this industry. It falls into three main categories: (*a*) the major industries such as tea, rubber, and coconuts, (*b*) rice industry or paddy cultivation, (*c*) growing of other food products, fruit growing and chena cultivation. The three main industries afford employment to a very large number of people whose happiness is entirely dependent on the prosperity of these industries. In the best interest of Ceylon these should be considered national industries and protected as far as possible from any undue competition from outside and the present markets in the world for the marketing of their produce should be retained and further markets explored. Nearly two million acres of land is planted with these products. With regard to paddy cultivation and the rice industry it is gratifying to note that the Minister of Agriculture has taken timely action and the passage of the land bill will further ensure to the paddy grower a reasonable return by his hard labours.

We are not satisfied that fruit growing and the production of other food products have been given due prominence in the development of agriculture and it is hoped that in the near future sufficient encouragement and assistance would be given for the establishment of a canning industry.

The Minister of Agriculture has embarked on projects for the colonization of both the dry zone and wet zone. The former is much more difficult as the problem of malaria presents itself with all its vigour, but it is hoped by the introduction of scientific methods these insurmountable barriers could be overcome and that those experiments ultimately prove successful. State aid to colonists and peasant proprietors are now an accepted policy of the State Council, and we would urge on Government a more liberal application of this policy.

Hand in hand with agriculture, the nascent local in-[dustries] should be fostered. The National Congress recommends to the [author-]ities the early establishment of a properly organised ind[ustries ?] department. Cottage industries like weaving, lacquer, po[ttery ?], lace-making should receive greater patronage at the hands [of the] Government. These industries are not being carried on [on a proper ?] basis and without Government aid it will not be possible to have them well-established.

With regard to health and sanitation a great deal of work has yet to be done if Ceylon is to keep abreast of other civilized countries.

The recent malaria epidemic has disclosed the true state of affairs which have existed in the bulk of the villages during several decades. An organized campaign to raise the earning capacity of the average man is essential. The State should provide better and adequate facilities for the treatment of children, expectant mothers and infants. The alarming high rate of mortality, especially among infants, calls for comment, and early steps should be taken by the Medical Department to remedy this sad state of affairs. In many parts of the country the inhabitants are subject to the incidence of Malaria, Parangi and the Hook-worm disease which have inflicted immense suffering on them

and have consequently rendered them incapable to earn [*sic*] a livelihood. It is therefore obvious that a more liberal policy should be pursued for the establishment of more dispensaries, hospitals, clinics and other treatment centres and a large staff of Medical Officers will be required to effectively render medical and other social services to the country. It is gratifying to note that the Minister of Health and his Committee have given some meagre encouragement to the Ayurvedic System of Medicine. The masses of the country have still great faith in this indigenous system of medicine and a large percentage of the population have recourse to the Ayurvedic Practitioners in case of illness. We would urge on the authorities that greater assistance be given for the promotion of Ayurveda.

The solution of the housing problem both in the urban and rural areas is a pressing need. An early investigation of this problem is considered essential and I would commend the same to the authorities. Next I pass on to the subject of education.

The State Council is to be congratulated for voting annually nearly one sixth of the total revenue for the promotion of education. It is gratifying to record that even when the Exchequer was at a very depleted state the State Council did not stint money for the educational needs of the country. However, there are still nearly 200,000 children for whom no educational facilities have been provided. I venture to state that it is the primary duty of the Government to make provision to give an elementary education to every child in this country. Public utterances have been given to by leading educationalists that [the] time has arrived for a complete change in the present educational system. The existing system has served the needs of the country during the past [for] over a century. But today learned professions are overcrowded and unless timely action is taken the problem of unemployment among educated youths will take a serious turn and the seed of discontentment [*sic*] will be sown in the country which will be greatly prejudicial to the progress of the people.

The language question is of the greatest importance in any scheme of education. At present only a small percentage of the children attending schools get a chance of learning English. The official language of the country is English and every opportunity should be given to a child to learn English free up to the primary classes. In this country there are three principal languages, namely, English, Sinhalese and Tamil, and the aim of our education system should be to impart and give every child an elementary knowledge in reading and writing of all the three languages. This would incidentally tend to the disappearance of communal differences too. The rural scheme of education which has passed the experimental stage and has now come to stay should be further developed and extended to other schools. The vocational bias should be encouraged creating in the young children a desire to pursue a practical form of education. It is regrettable to note that the establishment of the Ceylon University has been long delayed. The secondary education which requires a radical change has to remain unaltered until the University comes into being, as at present our secondary schools have to cater to the requirements of the London University.

Arts and crafts require greater consideration at the hands of the authorities. Technical and industrial education too has to be developed and made attractive to the youth of the country. One notices with dismay a gradual deterioration of the physique of the children of the villages, particularly of school-going age and I am strongly of opinion that all children attending school should be provided with a mid-day meal. It is a scientific fact that a healthy body is productive of a sound mind. "Mensa in corpora sano."

Next I pass on to the question of unemployment on which you are called upon to consider an important resolution. This serious problem has been before the country for the last few years but unfortunately our politicians have not still been able to discover a satisfactory solution. The unrestricted influx of labourers from the neighbouring continent has seriously undermined the security of indigenous labour. It has also resulted in undue competition and

the lowering of the standard of living. The future of the permanent population is seriously affected. The Congress demands the early appointment of a *commission to investigate* the causes that have brought about the present unsatisfactory state of affairs.

Next I come to the headmen system which was the subject of a recent inquiry by a competent commission. The report of the commission was published as a sessional paper in November this year. The headman plays a great part in the welfare of a village and if he happens to be a good, honest and a straight man he is popular and looked up to by the whole village. Among them there are good and bad headmen as is the case in every service. The Report calls for careful study and I trust a well considered opinion of the Congress will give a right lead to the country when the question comes up for consideration in the next State Council.

I next come to consider the question of local administration. There is a general feeling of disappointment that the Committee of Local Administration has not grappled [with] this important question. Although from time to time several amendments have been made to the Village Committees Ordinance a proper and comprehensive ordinance has not still been placed on the statute book. A large number of Urban District Councils have been established, but what of Rural Councils and Small Towns ? A new constitution has been granted to the city of Colombo, but the constitutions of the Municipal Councils of Kandy and Galle still remain unamended. The importance of local self-government in a system of government control cannot be emphasised too much. The Donoughmore Commissioners realized the importance of local administration in its close relation to the rapid development of the country and their considered opinion was that [the] services of an expert will have to be requisitioned. They recommended that the Executive Committee should borrow, at any rate for the

first few years. the aid of an expert adviser in Local Government from Great Britain, who will bring to the assistance of local knowledge an acquaintance with the most modern developments of public administration in England.

The next resolution which I would wish to refer to is the one dealing with rural development. The object of a scheme of rural development is to raise the standard of village life. The villager today is cut off from the rest of his fellow countrymen. He takes little or no interest to improve his condition, to have better food, better clothing, better house, better health, etc. He often displays an apathy and is content with one meal a day. The burden of debt weighs over his head and he has very little hope in life and no ambition to aspire to. In this helpless state of his, some friendly advise and guidance will go a long way to improve the condition of the man in the backwood. The educated youth of the country can be of immense service in a scheme calculated to uplift the masses. Preferably every village should be provided with a community centre in regard to education, health, sanitation, agriculture, co-operation, marketing and other allied matters.

To achieve any success an experiment of this nature should receive the fullest support of the various departments of government which are closely connected and interested in the life of the villager and the amelioration of his living conditions. Side by side with any benefits he may derive materially, facilities should be given him for spiritual development too. He should reform himself in his morals and this could best be achieved under the influence of religious agencies without whose help a scheme of this nature will not work efficiently. The Congress is strongly of opinion that an early scheme should be formulated and put into practical effect at the earliest opportunity.

The question of Ceylonization of the services has been a matter dear to the National Congress and a strong demand has been put forward from time to time for the Ceylonization in all branches of the services. The government did not pay serious attention until recently to the demand

claimed by the country. The Secretary of State in his despatch on the Interim Report of the Salaries and Cadres Commission virtually accepted the policy of Ceylonization in all departments except where the services of specialised technical officers are needed. But now in the case of higher services an attempt is being made to reverse that policy and the authorities are seeking to preserve a portion of posts for imported officers both in the Civil Service and the Police Department.

The Congress will definitely oppose any attempt to reverse the decision of the Secretary of State and will demand that where Ceylonese are available that they be employed in the service of Government. It is a serious libel and grave reflection on the educated youth of this country that their birthright should be denied to them. The Congress can see no reason whatever to a [*sic*] retention of ratio, which is a vicious principle, and we would appeal to the powers that be to consider this matter which is of vital importance to the future well-being of this country.

The next matter I crave your indulgence to refer to is the policy of government in regard to taxation. The present incidence of taxation demands an early investigation as a very heavy burden falls on the poor of the country who form the bulk of the population.

When the Income Tax Ordinance was introduced it was freely stated that the poor classes would receive adequate relief as some of the import duties on articles of food and other necessaries of life would be considerably reduced. But it is disheartening to note that adequate steps have not been taken to honour this pledge on the part of government. But on the other hand, a ten per cent increase on most of the articles required by the poor for their everyday life was imposed, as a temporary revenue measure for the specific purpose of finding sufficient money to balance the country's budget.

The Congress is strongly opposed to the improper and undue exploitation of the poor who are already suffering untold hardship for want of an adequate supply of food. We strongly urge upon government that relief be granted to the poor by the withdrawal of these iniquitous taxes.

I desire to express a note of warning in regard to the policy pursued by the Minister of Home Affairs and his Committee relating to Excise matters. It is depressing to find the authorities drifting away from the avowed policy of temperance. Under the pretext of salvaging an industry which is in a parlous state at the moment, reactionaries are busy at work [attempting] to secure extended facilities for the production and import of foreign liquor. The Congress deprecates any attempt to increase the consumption of liquor and demands the gradual restriction of the import of foreign liquor as well as the production of local liquor.

The Congress also demands that a liberal policy should be followed in regard to our roads and transport facilities. A net-work of good roads is essential for the development of the country. Agriculturists both large and small are greatly handicapped due to the inadequacy of road facilities. To get from one district to another in the shortest possible time is of great importance and in the future years to come, it is hoped that a great advance will be made in this direction. An efficient internal telephone service is also an important need and we do trust that government will not neglect such amenities which exist today in all civilised centres of the world.

Fellow delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, I fear that I have overtaxed your patience but I can assure you that I have striven hard to curtail my remarks. It is of the utmost importance on an occasion like this to place before the public of Ceylon the progressive ideals which the Congress is aspiring to, and its past record and future programme of work.

Before I conclude I should like to make a general appeal to all the races and communities that have adopted this Island as their permanent home. May I remind them that the welfare of the Ceylonese Community will stand to their advantage and that they should extend their good will, co-operation, assistance and support towards the political aspirations of the country. I make a special appeal to the chief Non-Ceylonese Communities, namely the European and the Indian, and in making this appeal I am not unmindful of the fact that suspicion and district have caused the cleavage and alienation of their sympathy. I believe that the European Community will be the first to admit that despite the most unfavourable conditions under which the new constitution was inaugurated and the serious obstacles that stood in the path of the actual working of the constitution that Ceylonese politicians have stood the test of time and have proved their capacity to govern and have come out in flying colours.

The European Communities through the medium of their organizations have often acclaimed their willingness to co-operate and sympathise with the aspirations of the Ceylonese. May I appeal to them to translate such sentiments into action and we hail the true benefactors of Ceylon by lending their hands to us to enable us to reach the goal of our political emancipation.' The Congress do recognize a large interest of both agriculture and trade owned by the European Community. The Indians too have in recent years established large business and trade interests. It shall be our best endeavour to disabuse the minds of both the European and the Indian Communities and assure them of our willingness to rehabilitate our cordial relationship and extend to them our ready co-operation. We do trust they will realise that the Ceylonese Community will not rest contended [sic] until the goal of Swaraj is reached.

This last appeal I make to my countrymen, particularly to the youth of the country. Ye my young friends respond to the clarion call of Mother Lanka. Sink your differences,

1. Sentence as in typed manuscript.

and rise above race, colour, creed and caste and work for the common good of your mother-land. A strong political conscientiousness should be awakened and [sic] cultivate and foster a genuine desire to work in the true name of service regardless of reward or praise. The sense of nationalism should be inculcated into all our undertakings whether they be private or public.

Stand together and march abreast and the path shall lead you to the desired end. I appeal to all right-thinking people to join us and work under the banner of Congress. It is not a coterie but an institution which has existed for seventeen years with over one hundred affiliated associations scattered all throughout the country. The Congress can claim to have a definite policy and programme and it shall be my endeavour to respect and adhere to the principles of Congress. The Congress expects the country to support and return to the next State Council men who are in sympathy with the aspirations of the country. In the years to come the struggle for political freedom has to be further advanced and the rank and file of the State Council must be strengthened by men of character, ability, calibre and independence, if this fight is to be carried to a successful issue. When my tenure of office as your President comes to a close, I hope I shall be able to have happy memories of my stewardship and I can assure you of my honest and sincere services to the country and to the Congress.

I would finally appeal to all affiliated associations to make the forthcoming year one of great activity and expansion and not merely to rest contended [sic] with passing resolutions and meeting together.

I would commend to you and wish you would undertake some work of rural uplift and organize yourselves better by coming into closer contact with the poor, to work enthusiastically and lead them to prosperity and happiness so that they will be able to march forward with confidence, courage and renewed vigour along the clear path of political independence.

Fellow delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen, I have now done and thank you again from the bottom of my heart for the patient hearing you have accorded to me.

The Resolutions

Mr. R. S. S. Gunewardene moved the first resolution on the agenda:

> The Donoughmore Constitution having been given a fair trial, the Ceylon National Congress demands the immediate amendment of the said Constitution in the following respects:—
>
> (*a*) The removal of the Officers of State, (*b*) The control of the Finances and the Public Services, (*c*) The restriction of the powers of the Governor, (*d*) the creation of Cabinet responsibility, (*e*) the increase in the number of seats in the State Council from 50 to 65.

Answer to Communal Criticism

In seconding the resolution, Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa said that the allegations had been made by a political caucus in the North that in the selection of men for government posts the Tamils had been badly treated. He maintained that in the selection of men for Government posts Tamils had been very generously treated and gave several instances where Tamils had been preferred to Sinhalese. A large number of Tamils, he said, were employed as teachers in schools in Sinhalese speaking districts. He wondered whether there was a single Sinhalese employed as a teacher in any of the Jaffna schools.

The Real Need

Sir Baron Jayatilaka, supporting the resolution, said that he did not know whether it was necessary to increase the number of seats in the State Council from 50 to 65. People thought that even the present number was too much, and there was the complaint that there was too much talking in the State Council.

He did not think that they need worry very much about the Governor's powers. What they wanted was responsible government. Under a responsible form of Government the Governor would not use his powers without the consent of the Ministers. The King of England had vast powers, but His Majesty never used those powers without the consent of the cabinet. If they got responsible government there would be no fear from Governor's powers.

An Allegation Refuted

Sir Baron next refuted the allegations made by Mr. A. Mahadeva in the State Council that the Tamils did not receive just treatment at the hands of the Sinhalese. He referred to several instances where Tamils were preferred to Sinhalese in making government appointments, and cited the case of Mr. Mahadeva himself who was appointed Manager of the State Mortgage Bank in preference to Sinhalese applicants for the post. He assured the minority communities that they would receive just treatment at the hands of the Sinhalese.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

To Solve Unemployment

Mr. P. H. A. Silva moved:

> This Congress views with alarm the extent of unemployment prevalent in this country and requests Government to appoint a Commission to consider the question of restricting immigration and further to investigate the causes that have contributed to such unemployment.

Mr. J. P. Seneviratne seconded and Mr. R. P. G. de Silva supported the resolution which was carried.

Headman System

Mr. Peter Perera moved:

> This Congress is of opinion that a reform of the headman system is urgently necessary in the interests

of the country and requests the Government to accept the principles contained in the report of the Headman Commission and to give effect to its recommendations.

Mr. G. P. Samarawickrema seconded the resolution. *Mudaliyar* J. J. de Mel opposed the resolution. He said that out of the population of Ceylon only 202 witnesses gave evidence before the Headman Commission. Why should they accept the recommendations of the five persons who signed the majority report. He did not think that the Commission had made out a strong case against the headman system. He, however, agreed that reform was necessary in certain directions, but the headman system should not be abolished altogether.

The resolution was carried.

Local Government Needs

Mr. W. R. Wijemanne moved:

This Congress requests the Government to secure the services of an expert to advise and organise the system of Local Government in Ceylon as recommended by the Donoughmore Commission.

Mr. D. Alagiyawanna seconded, and Mr. G. K. W. Perera supported the resolution which was carried.

Mr. D. M. S. K. Kaviraja moved:

This Congress is of opinion that a scheme of rural development is urgently necessary for the uplift of the masses of the country and requests the Government to formulate and give effect to such a scheme.

Remarks That Were Withdrawn

Mr. C. D. A. Gunawardene, seconding the resolution, attacked Mr. D. S. Senanayake's policy which, he said, had not benefited agriculture. Mr. Senanayake had been described as the reincarnation of Parakrama Bahu the Great.

That was, he said, an insult to the great king, Parakrama Bahu. Mr. Senanayake was the last man, he said, who should be sent to the State Council again.

At this stage, the audience showed their resentment at these remarks by interruptions and shouts of "withdraw."

Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, who supported the resolution, vigorously defended Mr. Senanayake, who he said, was the best of all the seven Ministers. On being called upon to do so by the audience, Mr. C. D. A. Gunawardene withdrew his remarks about Mr. Senanayake.

The resolution was carried.

A National Fund

Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara moved:

> The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that steps be taken by the Executive Committee for the creation of a National Fund.

Mr. D. R. Jayawardene seconded and Mr. D. S. Gunesekera supported the resolution, which was carried unanimously.

The following Executive Committee was appointed. [A list of the members provided at this point is reproduced elsewhere] Mr. D. J. Senaratne then proposed a vote of thanks to the chair.

29: D. Appendix to the Seventeenth Annual Sessions

(1) Newspaper Report on the Inaugural Meeting of the Lanka Sama Sama Samaja Party, 21 December 1935[1]

Birth of New Socialist Party
Its Aims and Policy
Chairman's Attack on Congress

"And with the Jayatilakas and Senanayakes travel the rump that is miscalled the Ceylon National Congress," said

1. *CDN*, 23 December 1935.

Mr. Colvin R. de Silva, President of the new Lanka Sama Samaja Party, which held its first public meeting at the Lorenz College Hall, Colombo, on Saturday.

In explaining the reasons for forming this new political party Mr. de Silva, who presided, referred to other parties —both dead and still living—and then submitted that Socialism was the remedy for the economic and political ills of today.

The proceedings were in English. The Chairman, in addressing the gathering in English, said that the proceedings were conducted in that language not because they considered English as the major and most important language in this country. It was their intention to hold a series of public meetings explaining the aims and objects of their party and they hoped to conduct subsequent meetings in Sinhalese and Tamil.

C.I.D. Interested

It had been a feature of Ceylon's political life in recent years that parties should spring up like mushrooms overnight on the eve of a general election, said Mr. de Silva. But he did not think that there were any who would suspect that the L. S. S. P. was but another ephemeral organisation formed purely for the purpose of supporting certain candidatures. It was only through a determined Socialist party that the ultimate salvation of the people of Ceylon could assuredly come. Time was when the meetings of the Ceylon National Congress were the unofficial meeting place of the C.I.D. The day was not long past when they regularly attended that incomparable public entertainment that is known as the Ceylon Labour Party. But there would be no plainclothes men at the Ceylon National Congress meeting at Galle that day nor at the meeting at the Town Hall in support of the candidature of Mr. Goonesinha. They would be at their meeting—the meeting of the L. S. S. P. Nothing proved more clearly the fact that the Ceylon National Congress and the Ceylon Labour Party had become the partners of imperialism and the accredited agents of capitalism.

A Change-Over

Even a superficial study of the events of the recent past could not fail to convince them that the patriots of the past had become the servitors of the present.

The growth of Socialist opinion in this country had reduced them to hysterics. Not surprisingly. They were well aware that with the rise of Socialism their power and influence was inevitably doomed. So that it was not strange that the contemporary political philosophy of Sir Baron Jayatilaka was concentrated in the one word, "Bolshie!" "And with the Jayatilakas and the Senanayakes travel the rump that is miscalled the Ceylon National Congress," continued Mr. de Silva. "This organisation of landowners had acted in the name of the people for the establishment of its own exclusive power. And with the introduction of the Donoughmore Constitution the amplitude of their self-satisfaction has known no bounds. It is a well known fact that Dr. Wickremasinghe, a socialist, was the first to discover the spear that alone could pierce the hard hide of their inglorious self-satisfaction."

Howl And The Roar

Mr. de Silva went on, "It is not, however, only the leaders of Congress that have rightly seen the menace to their position by the growth of a Socialist party. The Jayatilaka howl finds its echo in the Goonesinha roar. Let it not be thought that I do not give Mr. Goonesinha the credit that is rightfully his. He is not so much a host in himself—he is two congresses in himself. The meetings of the Ceylon Labour Party and the Trade Union Congress remind me of nothing so much as a travelling circus in which the central turn is always played by the same clown. The labouring classes of this country have been misled by such wrong leadership into believing that the function of their organisations is to struggle for the insecure crumbs that may happen to fall from the capitalist table. It will be the function of the L. S. S. P. to teach them that the road to economic emancipation lies only along the road to political power."

Such were the parties that receive the most publicity in the press of this country. There was also another shadowy organisation which came to birth in appropriate circumstances and had faded away with the reason that gave it being. He referred to the now defunct Liberal Party which came to birth to fight the income-tax and which had faded into non-existence with the introduction of that eminently just measure.

The State Council

The State Council, continued Mr. de Silva, was but a casual collection of supposedly eminent individuals with no real party affiliations. Their political platforms were but vehicles for lordly speeches with no serious intention. The mirage of their apparent opposition only served to hide the unanimity of their real objectives. There could be no real difference of party where there was no essential difference of principle. They were all capitalist organisations working instinctively for capitalist ends. That alone was sufficient reason, if excuse was necessary, for the organisation of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party.

That however was but a temporary reason. The ultimate reason for the rise of the L. S. S. P. was to be sought in the trend of world opinion and in the facts of Ceylonese conditions. The system called Capitalism had now dominated the world for one and a half centuries. And all over the world today the bankruptcy of that system to provide for the universal welfare of mankind was evident.

Soviet Russia today concretely illustrates the untold opportunities for progress that existed under a socialist system even when the surrounding capitalist world was labouring in the depths of economic depression.

Choice Of Party's Name

Dealing with certain criticisms of the party which appeared in the press, Mr. de Silva said that there seemed to be an idea abroad that the L. S. S. P. was intended for those with a tendency towards Socialism. There should be

no such mistake. The L. S. S. P. was an organisation of convinced Socialists whose function it was to create an increasing number of convinced Socialists in Ceylon and to get for them that mass backing which was essential for the introduction of Socialist measures. It was for that very reason that its name had been chosen. To Socialists as such the name was not particularly material, provided the policy of the party was Socialist. But for purposes of a mass appeal the name gained considerable importance. Their main work would be in the vernaculars. In vernacular organs the term Sama Samaja was already familiar. It would be for them to give to that term the necessary content of significance.

Against Imperialism

The question of the name, however, could well be the occasion for genuine difference of opinion. The same cannot be said of another criticism of their party when considered from a proper Socialist point of view. It had been suggested that they were making a fundamental mistake in placing the objective of national independence in the forefront of their programme. Dark reference had been made to tribalistic tendencies and the futility of undertaking a struggle against a world wide imperialist power. That was a criticism that proceeded either from defeatism or from an incorrect appreciation of the facts. The suggestion that the shortest way to Socialism was through the British Empire proceeded from a failure to grasp the true nature of imperialism. If only they realised that modern imperialism was but capitalism "in excelsis," that imperialism bases itself essentially on the mass exploitation of colonial peoples for the benefit of an exploiting people, and that a goodly portion of the woes of Ceylon's people was the result directly of imperial exploitation, then that argument would never have been [illegible].

Capitalists All

The fight [illegible] capitalist exploitation [illegible], in Ceylon, led to the fight for national liberation. The more powerful and more [illegible] imperialist section of the capital[illegible]

class in Ceylon was the British section. The tin gods of Ceylonese capitalism must ever bow to the high gods of British imperialism. What was more they must, in the ultimate analysis, also be their allies. So that in the fight for the establishment of the Socialist society they had inevitably to come up against the reality of imperialist exploitation.

The L. S. S. P. was, therefore, an organisation of Socialists fighting to give the struggle for Socialism a mass basis. For that purpose it was not sufficient to attempt to educate our people in the general tenets of the Socialist creed. It was necessary to throw themselves consciously in the forefront of their daily political and economic struggle, and through the fight for their daily needs to convince them that along the way of Socialism alone could those needs be ultimately and completely fulfilled.

Social Inequality

Dr. S. A. Wickremasinghe spoke on the "abolition of social and economic inequality and oppression arising from differences of class, caste, race, creed and sex." Political subjection meant poverty and that was the problem they had to tackle, he said. Today they had in Ceylon the worst poverty and also rich men, which meant that there was economic inequality. The attitudes of some of the Buddhist leaders was that some were born rich and some born poor on account of "Karma." If there was a cause of poverty there must be a way of removing that poverty and that inequality. That was the problem they had to tackle, the greatest problem that the world was faced with.

Village Conditions

In places not very far from Colombo itself the degradation of the people was awful. In a village called Talahena he found people who were living like savages in a primitive manner. In one village hut he had seen a mother, who had given birth to a child, lying on a dirty mat. The body was laid on a "kolapotha" with no clothes on. The mother was suffering from malaria. There was a small boy at the door, perhaps to drive the devil out of the house. There were no other inmates and none to help or render assistence. That

was the primitive degradation in which some people live nowadays while the latest motor cars were imported for the enjoyment of the rich. That economical inequality had to be remedied.

In A Women's Club

"Recently," continued Dr Wickremasinghe, a entertainment was arranged at the Women's International Club where drinking went on till late into the night. A common pig was roasted in an open fire and was served by a Hawaiian dancing woman and the first bit was eaten by the Buddhist leader, Sir Baron Jayatilaka." He only mentioned that incident, said the doctor, to show them a picture so that they might understand what economic inequality was and the moral degradation it brought about in the country

Continuing, he referred to caste inequalities and inequalities resulting from a belief in different creeds In a socialist society such inequality was incapable [sic], he said, and that was the main object of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party.

Not Plunder

Dr. N. M. Perera, speaking on the "socialisation of the means of production, distribution and exchange," said that the present system was one in which everybody took as much as one liked and left very little for the others. It was a game of grab, the most powerful getting the maximum and the person who needed most getting the least. It was a policy of "laissez faire," to conserve the wealth and riches to the rich people and to take away what little the poor had. It was a case of each for himself and God for us ...ll. He believed that one of many reasons why they were in ...he position to launch a Ceylon Socialist Party was because ...ere was a growing army of thinking, unemployed young ...en who honestly felt there was something radically wrong ... the present scheme of things.

...What was meant by socialisation ? It did not mean large-...le plunder and pillage. It did not mean that hotheaded ...ng men would scour the city and despoil Sir D. B. ...atilaka, Mr. D. S. Senanayake or Sir Henry de Mel

and distribute the spoils among the poor in Mariakade. If they did that they would be creating fresh problems. Socialisation meant the abolition of a system which provided profit to the individual and not to the state. The Socialist party aimed at giving equal chances to all and avoiding waste.

For National Independence

Mr. Philip Gunawardena, who spoke on the "attainment of complete national independence," said that the gathering present was a sufficient reply to the mediaeval politics of Sir Baron Jayatilaka in whose own Constituency, in the villages of Talahena and Yabaraluwa, people lived a life which was truly pictured by Dr. Wickremasinghe, and yet nothing was done to improve those conditions. Attempts had been made by so-called Socialists to make out that the Socialist party should not fight for national independence. He feared that such people suffered from the same mentality as that of the British Fabian Party and of Sir Baron Jayatilaka, the much-boosted national idol of this country. They were not impervious to national pride. They swore by their national heroes, their literature and their heritage. They were proud of Rajasinha who kept the Portuguese at bay for a quarter of a century. They were proud of Puran Appu who attempted to release the Ceylonese from the yoke of British Imperialism. They were proud of the country's heroes but not of the "abbitaya of fifty years ago of the Peliyagoda Pirivena who was transformed into the large scale Sir Baron Jayatilaka."

Their Aim

The Socialist Party were trying to prevent a group of people in Great Britain from enjoying the fruits of the workers and peasants in this country. The British Empire was known as the Commonwealth of Nations. It was true in a sense that it was a sort of common wealth—India and the Crown Colonies were the common wealth of Imperial England. They were fighting to get that common wealth from the privileged class in Britain and hand it over to the masses in this country.

30. EIGHTEENTH ANNUAL SESSIONS, 19 DECEMBER 1936

30: A. Agenda[1]

Ananda College Hall, Colombo, 10 a.m.

1. Welcome Song by the Children.
2. Address by the Chairman of the Reception Committee.
3. Reading of the Annual Report of the work done by the Ceylon National Congress in 1936.
4. The President's Address.
5. Election of the Executive Committee.
6. Resolutions.

(a) "The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that in pursuance of its declared policy immediate steps should be taken to press for the introduction of a system of full parliamentary government for Ceylon."

(b) "In pursuance of Article 12 of the rules of the Ceylon National Congress, this Congress resolves to adopt the new constitution of the Congress as submitted by the Executive Committee."

(c) "The Ceylon National Congress is of poinion that the further participation of Ceylon in a scheme of Imperial Preference is detrimental to the economic well-being of the Island."

(d) "That Indian estate labourers enjoying the franchise under the Ceylon State Council Order-in-Council of 1931 be made subject to all the existing laws of the country."

(e) "That in view of the acute economic situation and the consequent increase of unemployment in the country, Government should take immediate steps to introduce a well-considered scheme of State-aided industrial development."

1. From C.N.A., 60/46.

7. Variety Entertainment provided by the members of the Parakrama Dramatic Club.

P. D. S. Jayasekera,
Victor C. Perera,
Hony. Secretaries, C. N. C.

Colombo, 19.12.36.

30 : B. Draft Report on the Session[1]

At the eighteenth annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress at the Ananda College on Saturday Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya, who was re-elected President, in his address recalled the following words of Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam in 1919 at the first session of Congress.

> By the inaguration of the Congress, we proclaim once for all that we have done with our petty differences and dissensions and that whatever one's creed, race, or caste may be, if only, in the memorable words of an island chronical, the Mahawansa, 'he makes himself one with the people,' he is a true son of Lanka, a true Ceylonese, and entitled both to serve our dear motherland to the best of his power; and to enjoy in the fullest measure the advantages and benefits she offers.

"You will admit, fellow delegates," said Mr. Amarasuriya, "that we have no right to deviate from those true and inspiring ideals of common action."

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1. C. N. A., 60/96; a handwritten manuscript, with the exception of the President's speech. This report appeared in the *CDN*, 21 December 1936 and a portion of the President's speech has been highlighted at the outset thereby entailing some repetition. The headlines provided in the draft and in the *CDN* read:

Congress Ideals of Unity
Sir P. Arunachalam's Words Recalled
President's Plea For Support.

Among those present at the sessions were Messrs. D. S. Senanayake, W. A. de Silva, G. C. S. Corea, E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, J. N. Jinendradasa, Thomas Amarasuriya, P. de S. Kularatne, G. G. Punchihewa, Timothy de Silva and K. W. Taylor (visitor). The Chairman of the Reception Committee welcomed the delegates after which Mr. Victor C. Perera, the Secretary, submitted the report of the work done in 1936 by the Congress.

Mr. de Fonseka, in extending a cordial welcome to the delegates and visitors, said it was a matter for regret to find so few of the prominent members of the Congress present. In recent times many of the prominent members of Congress had formed separate bodies and a former President had described the Congress as a dying voice and predicted the dissolution of the Congress. Although their members were few, the people had confidence in the Congress and their faith yet remained unshaken. He congratulated the members on having elected Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya to be President of the Congress for another year. He called upon Mr. Amarasuriya to take the chair.

Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya's Presidential Address'

Fellow delegates, ladies and gentlemen,

Permit me to associate myself, to the fullest degree, vith the warm and cordial welcome which has been xtended to you by the Chairman of the Reception ommittee.

Your presence, in such large numbers from various and tant parts of the Island, in spite of the considerable sonal inconvenience, is a happy augury for the support ch, I feel, will be given to the Congress in its arduous k during the coming year.

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vailable as a pamphlet printed by The Ceylon Daily News Press; 60/96. The pamphlet includes a photograph of Mr. Amarasuriya. N of 21 December published a concise version of his speech as a news item.

The Congress enters upon the 18th year of its existence. I consider it singularly fortunate that I should have been elected to preside over its deliberations a second time in succession. It would be ungracious on my part if I do not express my appreciation and gratitude, and also tender my sincere thanks for the great confidence you have in me, in having conferred upon me this signal honour in re-electing me your President for the ensuing year.

Personally, I would have been glad to lay down the burden of office, but I yielded to the persuasions of many of the ardent workers of the Congress, who induced me to continue in office, as the Congress is passing through a very critical period of its existence. This makes me feel that the responsibilities laid upon me this year are even greater than last year. I feel confident that, with your advice, sympathy, co-operation and good will, I shall be able to steer clear of dangerous rocks, angry seas and contrary winds, and bring the ship of Congress into safe harbour. I look forward to a year of crowded activities, and the launching of a programme of work which will secure to us the attainment of our political emancipation, and the creation of a great national consciousness. There are evidences of a lack of national fervour around us. This has retarded our progress considerably. It has resulted in a deplorable period of stagnation. We cannot afford to drift aimlessly in this culpable manner.

We must take stock anew of the present situation, mark out our deficiencies, and set about the necessary task of putting our own house in order.

This is an obligation which we cannot avoid if the country is to be awakened from the condition of apathy to which it has fallen.

If we bestir ourselves in this manner, the country will be led towards a period of productive activities. The founders of the National Congress were men of vision. They foresaw the needs of the country, and placed, therefore, in the forefront of their creed these fundamental objects.

The aim of the Ceylon National Congress is to secure for the people of Ceylon responsible government and the status of a self-governing member of the British Empire. This end is to be achieved by constitutional methods, by a reform of the existing system of Government and administration, by a vigorous development of self-governing institutions, and by organising and fostering the intellectual, moral and economic resources of the country. These objects are comprehensive and they can be attained only by the energizing of public life in this country.

The founders of Congress believed, and it is an unquestionable sign of their penetrating wisdom, that the people should work actively for their own wellbeing. They should prove themselves capable of working for the benefits which they hope to obtain. The Congress itself cannot obtain for this country all its rights; the people must be behind the Congress, working through this agency for their own salvation. The National Congress today, as always, respects this creed. Its work has been done under this inspiration. I can hopefully prophesy that so long as Congress continues to remain true to this creed, as it has done in the past, it will always retain its character as a living and energizing force, working unceasingly for the achievement of the aims of its creed, and it will thus remain a powerful and influential agency in the moulding of the country's future.

Every critic of the Congress should seriously and onscientiously ask himself whether or not Congress has een consistently loyal to this creed. Every unbiased mind ill agree that the Congress has done so. We can honestly aim to be the only political organisation which has thrown en the door to individuals comprising every section of the ple, irrespective of race, caste, creed or colour. May I, efore, appeal to all right-thinking men to cease indulging mutual recrimination, to sink all prejudices and rences, and join hands with us in the great struggle he liberation of this country. By this division of ests, we have left unexplored our full intellectual and mic resources, whilst others have ssensions amongst ourselves. Let [illegible] to

sacrifices and to subordinate our personal ambitions for the loyalty to a cause which alone will enable us to march ahead unimpeded.

Fellow Delegates, I do not propose to take your minds back to our early political history. It is an indisputable fact that the inauguration of the Ceylon National Congress 18 years ago was a landmark in the political progress of this country. May I recall the fact that just twenty-five years ago, there was only one elected Ceylonese representative in the Legislative Council. The franchise then was the monopoly of a few rich educated men. But today we are harvesting the results of the seeds sown in earlier years, as we now have 52 elected representatives, returned on the basis of universal franchise. The Ceylon National Congress played no insignificant part in bringing about these changes. Many reactionaries, particularly of the type of Mr. Page Croft, have vigorously denounced the grant of adult suffrage to the masses of his country. But the results of the last two general elections prove beyond any shadow of doubt, if proof were really necessary, that the Donoughmore Commissioners were the better judges, being fully justified in their generous estimate of the people of this country.

The acceptance of the Donoughmore Constitution, and its consequent introduction, have given opportunity to the representatives of the people to play a prominent part in the executive functions of Government in the initiation of policy and in the administration of departments. Our elected Ministers supported by their Committees have aptly demonstrated that the opportunity only was necessary for them to give proof of their capacity to administer the affairs of this country. In spite of handicaps and obstacles placed in their path, they have discharged their duties with great acceptance. The first State Council and its successor have, on the whole, worked the Constitution satisfactorily in spite of its inherent defects. As early as July, 1932, on the motions introduced by Mr. E. W. Perera, the then member for Horana and a past President of the Ceylon National Congress, a protracted and an exhaustive debate took place.

The Board of Ministers submitted a Memorandum to the Right Hon'ble The Secretary of State for the Colonies in accordance with the decisions arrived at as a result of this debate, and pointing [*sic*] out the difficulties encountered by them in the working of the present Constitution. Among other matters they pressed for a reform of the Constiution on the following main points:

(*a*) Removal of the Officers of State and their substitution by elected Ministers and Executive Committees of the Council.

(*b*) The strengthening of the position of the Board of Ministers by enabling them to initiate and carry out their financial policies.

(*c*) Alteration in the method of the election of Ministers.

(*d*) The reconstitution of the Public Services Commission.

(*e*) The deletion of provision for obtaining the prior sanction of the Governor in the case of bills, motions, resolutions, or votes affecting officers in the public services.

(*f*) The curtailment of the special powers of the Governor.

I do not consider it necessary to enter into a lengthy discussion as to the urgent need for a reform of the present *Constitution and to purge it of the defects in its* working. Suffice it to say that the urgency is becoming more pronounced day by day, as it is not an uncommon feature to have serious differences between elected Ministers and the three Officers of State, who form a sort of inner cabinet, and are only responsible to the Governor and not to the legislature. The three Officers of State were foisted temporarily, under the new scheme, as advisers to the elected Ministers and the Council generally. We feel their presence is no longer necessary, as our Ministers have gained the necessary experience to enable them to exercise their

judgment independently. We, therefore, demand of the authorities their removal and substitution by elected Ministers and Executive Committees of the Council.

We would also urge that the Board of Ministers, under a reformed Constitution, should enjoy the unrestricted power to control public finance and to initiate and carry out public policies unimpaired. The present position is far from satisfactory as the Ministers possess power without responsibility. They have no responsibility, because a bare majority of the Committee can initiate a policy even against the wishes of the Ministers. It is an entirely anomalous position that a Minister should be compelled to defend in open Council a policy which he has been forced to accept by his own Committee.

With regard to the method of electing Ministers, opinion is divided in the country; and we feel that, if our Board of Ministers is to function similar to the practice obtaining under a parliamentary system of government, the present method of election calls for improvement.

I now pass on to the question of the Public Services Commission which, as constituted at present, is a purely official body empowered to make recommendations to the Governor in regard to the appointment, promotion, transfer, dismissal and disciplinary control of public officers. I claim, you will agree, that this is not a state of affairs which could be allowed to continue without an early remedy. We would strongly advocate the reconstitution of the Public Service Commission by a body of independent men who can bring an unbiased mind to bear on matters referred to them for their disposal. If this were done, the present vicious practice of consulting Executive Committees in regard to appointments could with advantage be abolished.

Article 87 (1) of the Order in Council is an objectionable feature in our Constitution as it demands the Government's prior sanction for the introduction of bills, motions, resolutions, and votes affecting officers in the Public Service. This

provision in the Constitution has made the Public Services an unduly protected entity. The Personal Emoluments Bill is soaring year by year, and the Council is precluded from making any motion calculated to alter the conditions of service of any public officer in the employ of government prior to the introduction of the Donoughmore Constitution. The need for the deletion of this provision was never felt more urgently than during the recent depression, owing to the inability to meet our commitments to pay the Public Services. We, therefore, consider the deletion of this provision an essential step in the future governmental system of this country.

Article 22 of the Order in Council which empowers the Governor the right to certify any measure on the ground of paramount importance, or necessary to give effect to the provisions of the Order in Council, has been very loosely applied by the Governor in matters which cannot, by any stretch of the imagination, come into the category of matters of paramount importance. The frequent abuse of this power has given a peculiar interpretation to the phrase "of paramount importance." The Donoughmore Commissioners were of opinion that the power of the Governor should be more supervisory than executive, if the Constitution had any semblance of a democratic form of government. We, therefore, demand that the Constitution should be amended so as to curtail and restrict the special powers vested in the Governor.

I have only referred in passing to some of the grave defects in the Donoughmore Constitution. I am of opinion that the Constitution renders itself capable of amendment because this was granted, in the words of the Commissioners themselves, as an experiment worthy of a trial. I submit a fair trial has been given to the Constitution, and unless these inherent defects, which I have referred to, are removed, we shall see the sad spectacle of conflicts and certifications. I make bold to say that, with the best will in the world, no amount of co-operation on our part can surmount these difficulties unless the disease is eradicated from its roots.

ranks; and the unity which had been the cherished dream of the past was wrecked upon the adamantine prejudices which manifested themselves.

To this early and desired unity we must now return. There can be no quarrelling for the spoils of office. We have all suffered from the effects of this disunity. As men guided by wise maxims of policy in our public life we realise that we should heal our divisions, and present a united front. Much has already been achieved, but much more still remains to be done. We should not allow ourselves to be the victims of a "divide and rule" policy. It has been the bane of India that the communities have been divided. This country has also paid the price for lack of unity, in its own measure. It is the tendency of all governments to profit from this state of affairs. We cannot blame those who exploit such a situation when we refuse to adopt the remedy that lies in our own hands. We have no reason at the present time to divide our ranks. It is our duty to fulfil the anticipations which were the cherished objects of the founders of Congress; and I can do no better than quote to you the memorable words of Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam in 1919, at the first sessions of the Congress, when he made a powerful appeal for unity and for corporate action under the aegis of Congress:

> By the inauguration of this Congress, we proclaim once and for all that we have done with our petty differences and dissensions and that whatever one's creed, race, or caste may be, if only, in the memorable words of our Island's chronicle, the Mahawansa, "he makes himself one with the people," he is the true son of Lanka, a true Ceylonese, and entitled both to serve our dear Motherland to the best of his power; and to enjoy in the fullest measure the advantages and benefits she offers.

You will admit, Fellow Delegates, that we have no right to deviate from these true and inspiring ideals of common action; and make for ourselves new and false ideals which lead only to division, strife and a weakening of our ranks.

The Congress obtained for this country a substantial measure of political reforms in 1920 and again in 1923. If, when there was only one elected representative in Council, all communities shared a desire to act together for the common good, it is reasonable to ask that there should be a greater unity now when, by our united action, successful advances in the political life of this country have been obtained under the present Constitution.

But this has, unfortunately, not been the course of events. It is in the nature of things that dissensions should arise. But it is not essential in the nature of things that they should continue for ever to mar our future development by denying to us the services of thousands of our countrymen, who have their part to play in moulding the destinies of this country. It is a grave pity that the pages of this country's modern history should be darkened by a chapter of dissension, strife and prejudice. Our posterity will think that we have lost the advantages of many stirring political campaigns by our own lack of vision and weak impulsiveness in sacrificing their interests in our quarrelling over hard won spoils. In the political life of a country, continuity of action is an essential element of ultimate success. Progress should be maintained all along the line. One generation should not fritter away even a part of its heritage of success. They have to be own over again, and this is always a difficult, arduous and uncertain task. We have profited by the work of the generation before us; and we must consolidate their gains, add to them by our own endeavours, and hand over, unimpaired but increased, to in full measure, and even running over. This is a course which we must follow for the future. This task we must set about to accomplish without delay. There should be no more idle and damaging talk of maintaining a condition of secession. We must restore the ideals which stirred to action the generous-hearted founders of the Congress and which made its very existence possible.

Nor must we forget some of the fundamental considerations which were raised by the Donoughmore Commis-

sioners. They discovered the absence in this country of parties which were essential to the working of the parliamentary system of government. What they found in this country was an entirely fortuitous and accidental combination between persons who had only, on particular questions, the same views. When their aims had been fulfilled they fell apart. This is an obvious disadvantage. These groups, which are accidentally formed, shift and change ; having no bond of principle. They do not act upon formulated principles to which they owe allegiance. They might be tempted on occasion, by self-interest, to abandon a line of policy which is beneficial to the country. They might, under a sudden pressure of events, lose their hold on their judgments ; and find, when it is too late, that they have been the dupes of an intriguing group, which was able to temporarily advance some plausible grounds for their interested point of view. It will be seen that there are grave dangers in individuals working without a settled policy, such as a powerful party could lay down ; and the validity and acceptance of which, by the country, can be tested at the polls. The interests of the country must always be considered as of paramount importance ; and a party can test the opinion of the country much better than any group of individuals, under the hasty circumstances in which they combine for some immediate advantage to be secured by their acting together on one particular issue. In England, as well as other countries there is a growing danger that the individual is losing his freedom of action in recording a free vote. The particular danger in England is the dominating position of the Cabinet. This happens even under a system which is built on party principles. We in this country, have our own particular form of this problem, owing to the absence of the party system ; and the danger of obliterating the individuality of the private member is therefore all the more grave and imminent ; and can be combated only by adopting the party system, as we are intending to do in a definite programme. We must also not be blind to the possibility of narrow interests becoming the centre round which individuals group themselves. In England there are large policies, imperial and international

in their aspect, which give to parties the opportunity of forming themselves along distinct lines of alignment. In internal affairs, too, there are separate interests, large and sufficiently distinct, to warrant the existence of different schools of political thouht. But in Ceylon, this situation does not arise. We have no serious industrial problems; no foreign policies of the kinds which exist elsewhere; and no internal issues which make for the legitimate cleavage of opinions, sufficiently wide to warrant the formation of many parties with different objectives. There is also no urgent need for the formation of parties, the programmes of which overlap ours.

We do not think it wise policy, therefore, to create a multiplicity of parties which would ultimately result in greater cleavages. But we do not deny to any body of persons the right to decide for themselves whether or not they should form organisations of their own, with objects identical with those of the Congress; or which could be adequately served by the creation of Congress itself into a party. We do not wish to interfere with the judgment of individuals; but we feel that due attention should be given to such considerations as we have set down, before action is taken to create new bodies which do not have the authority of the Congress derived from a long history, a definite achievement in the political sphere, and an influence which is capable of serving the interests of the country, however diverse, and the common good, whatever form this may assume, now or in the future. The Congress is therefore, you will admit, right in assuming that there is an urgent necessity of its formation into a properly disciplined party.

The main interests of the country can be served by Congress through its functioning as a party. If there are other parties with distinctive features and serving special ends, the Congress is prepared to extend the right hand of fellowship to such institutions which function for the public good. This is the end we all have in view. Ceylon is mainly an agricultural country, with limited problems; and we feel that a number of separate bodies will tend to emphasise our divisions out of proportion to [illegible]

aims, and lead to some measure of internal disruption. In a small country, all sections of public opinion should hold together. The mere fact of separate bodies creates in the public mind the impression of divergent objects, and undermines the foundation of unity which is so essential to public life. The Congress will, however, gladly give and accept such co-operation as is necessary in order to advance the common good of the country. Congress is neither a coterie nor a caucus to serve any special interests. It claims to be the best instrument of public opinion in the country. Any opposing point of view is a fallacy which has been fostered by the deliberate refusal to acknowledge its claims. The Congress has absolutely no sectional interests; and it can, therefore, solicit the co-operation of all communities. In the words of the Donoughmore Commissioners: "It is the balance of parties which gives stability and prevents too frequent changes of government; it is the system which renders politics intelligible to the electorate; and it is the party system which reduce to a minimum the intrigues, bargainings and understandings which, in a house of petty groups, are apt to become an essential preliminary to every parliamentary system."

I would substantiate my argument by a quotation from Burke, the greatest political philosopher in British history, in his defence of the party system:

> "Party" says Burke, "is a body of men united for promoting by their joint endeavours, the national interest upon some particular principle in which they are all agreed. For my part, I find it impossible to conceive that any one believes in his own politics, or thinks them to be of any weight, who refuses to adopt the means of having them reduced to practice. It is the business of the speculative philosopher to mark the proper ends of government. It is the business of the politician, who is the philosopher in action, to point out proper means towards those ends, and to employ them with effect. Therefore, every honourable connexion will avow it is their first purpose to pursue every just method to put the men who hold their opinions into such a condition

as may enable them to carry their common plans into execution, with all the power and authority of the state. As this power is attached to certain situation, it is their duty to contend for these situations. Without a proscription of others, they are bound to give to their own party the preference in all things, and by no means, for private considerations, to accept any offers of power in which the whole body is not included; nor to suffer themselves to be led or to be controlled; or to be overbalanced in office or in council by those who contradict the very fundamental principles on which their party is formed, and even those upon which every fair connexion must stand. Such a generous contention for power, on such manly and honourable maxims, will easily be distinguished from the mean and interested struggle for place and emolument. The very style of such persons will serve to discriminate them from the numberless imposters who have deluded the ignorant with professions incompatible with human practice, and have afterwards incensed them by practices below the level of vulgar rectitude."

These are luminous principles and I recommend them to your earnest consideration. To join a party does not mean a form of political servitude. It only means that persons, with an interest in the country's well-being, agree upon some great leading general principles which they recognise as such before joining the party, and to which they are then bound to give their allegiance. It will be an incident of very rare occurrence if they disagree on one principle out of many; but they always have occasion for a common ground of action, and support each other upon the general principles on which all are agreed. The Congress, I would point out, in its leading principles, provides such common ground of action; and I would, therefore, appeal to persons of all communities, who have an interest in promoting the common good of the country to join us in doing this disinterested service instead of allowing the body politic to be distracted by the dissonance of contending and contentious aims, which hinder the realisation of an essential

advancement in every sphere of public activity. The emergence of Congress as a functioning and effective party, with the co-operation of all communities will, I have every reason to believe, mark a new and auspicious era of prosperity for this country.

The next resolution deals with the question of Imperial Preference. After mature consideration, and a close examination of its repercussions, we have come to the conclusion that the Ottawa Agreement, which resulted in the introduction of the scheme of Imperial Preference, has in its practical application, as far as Ceylon is concerned, acted detrimentally to our economic interests. We have not had a fair deal on the admitted principal of reciprocity, which is the fundamental principle which commends such a scheme to our acceptance. Other countries, participating in this scheme, have benefited at the expense of the poor of this country. The burden that we are labouring under has been further aggravated by the imposition of quotas on Japanese textiles by an Order-in-Council. This is a further demonstration of our importance [*sic*] to resist any measure imposed by the Imperial Government without due regard to the state of this country. This is truly an act of high-handedness on the part of the Imperial government, and a serious violation of the rights of our Legislature. The poor of this country, already hard hit by the depression and the malaria epidemic, are forced to undergo the further burden of paying more for articles of daily wear. We are, therefore, of opinion that our further participation in the scheme of preference is detrimental to the best intersts of this country. We also demand, as a measure of bare justice to the poor of this country, that the quotas imposed against our wishes should be withdrawn, thus relieving the poor of an intolerable burden.

The next resolution is an equally important one for the future development of the country. The three main industries, tea, rubber and coconut have reached a saturation point ; the former two owing to the operation of restriction schemes ; and the development of the latter has in recent years been greatly retarded owing to the

uneconomic prices coconut produce was able to command in the world's markets. I do not wish to over-emphasise how important it is to conserve our present markets. At the same time every possible attempt should be made to capture other markets, and find suitable outlets for our produce.

It is regrettable to note that up to the present time no proper facilities have been afforded by Government for the fostering of our nascent local industries. The grave economic situation, combined with the prevalence of widespread unemployment have caused the skilled worker to down his tools; and due to want of capital, and serious competition from outside, he is unable to establish himself in some industrial pursuit. We are strongly of opinion that a properly conceived scheme of industrial development should be undertaken, under the aegis of Government. The Industries Department, which has been recently established, should make itself more useful by giving instructions and practical help; and also by the dissemination of literature on industries that are best adaptable to the needs of the country.

The development of cottage industries should also find a proper place in this scheme, as a larger number of cottage workers is [sic] engaged in the production of well-turned out articles which could find a ready market, if properly advertised and organised. The success of industrial development in this country is largely dependent on the successful completion of the Hydro-Electric Scheme. It is a matter for regret that a scheme, which was conceived about fifteen years ago, has not still seen the light of day. Experts have prophesied that it has great potentialities and we trust that once for all, a start will be made and the scheme completed within a reasonable period.

The next resolution appertains to the immigrant labourer, who has elected to exercise his vote in the election of members to the State Council. We are of opinion that, if they intend to make Ceylon their permanent home, to which we have no objection, they should be made subject to he

ordinary laws of the land, and not be allowed to enjoy special privileges, which they would otherwise have been entitled to as temporary settlers.

There is need for wise statesmanship in this country, as the main problems which have confronted us for years have not yet been satisfactorily solved. Important as are problems of constitutional reform, we do not consider them purely as ends in themselves but only as means towards promoting the welfare of the people.

Good Government is tested by the amount of happiness, security and peace it can confer on the people. We are not unaware of the value of political advancement; but this must go hand in hand with economic advancement. The people cannot live on the thin fare of political doctrines. They must have the means of subsistence. If we do not work with this object in view we shall be creating a domestic problem which will assume dangerous proportions in the near future; and we will be convicted of being impracticable dreamers in respect of the actual well-being of the people, which we have failed to realise. Ceylon is still essentially an agricultural country. Its peasants have claims upon us, as they are the backbone of the country; and, without their prosperity, any schemes of development which we undertake will have no vital relation to the country's well-being. In ancient times the peasant was prosperous. Today, he is subject to many ills; mainly due to the systematic neglect of his condition. The peasant, owing to his work being unproductive, is being rooted out of his ancestral holdings and is becoming a casual labourer. This is a state of affairs which is surely a grave reproach to our statesmanship; and it is our duty to see that the peasant finds his living on his own land, and that his labours are made productive.

Recently, there has been too much exclusive concentration on the experiments in the dry zone. These schemes are expensive and without immediate results, in proportion to the enormous costs they entail. More attention might now be paid to the system of cultivation necessary in the wet

zones of the Island. In the dry zone, a population has to be induced to stay upon the land; in the wet zone, there is an already existing population which only requires some measure of encouragement to undertake cultivation Both dry zone and wet zone cultivation should be vigorously carried out, and with equal attention.

We hope that action will be taken to give a real measure of support to the peasantry in both the dry and the wet zones, so that more persons will take to productive cultivation. We have, in this country, only about 850,000 acres under paddy cultivation; and considering our total population, it can easily be recognised that we are bound to remain in an uncertain and humiliating position of dependence upon outside sources for our essential food products. A food production drive on an extensive scale, throughout the whole Island, is obviously imperative in the circumstances. This should be carried out under the direction and advice of the Government. We appreciate the efforts of the present energetic Minister of Agriculture in this direction; and we feel confident that the entire country will give him the necessary backing and support to make our island self-supporting in the matter of its food supply. It is absolutely necessary that the Agricultural Department should carry out further research, with a view to finding out suitable economic products for the greater development of agricultural industries.

We are of opinion that the present system of land development, by the grant of land to our peasants, is not in itself capable of satisfactory productive results, as the peasants labour under the difficulty of want of adequate capital for the development of such land. We would commend to Government the need of evolving a more generous scheme of financial assistance which would enable the peasantry to make paddy cultivation, and allied products, an economic proposition. There are vast possibilities of developing fruit-growing on a commercial basis which would ultimately lead to the establishment of a canning industry.

The producer's efforts have to be supplemented by exploring suitable outlets for his produce. We are in agreement that this could best be done to enable the peasant to have an adequate return by the further development of the co-operative movement for the purpose of production, distribution and sale.

Next to agriculture, we consider the preservation of health of importance to the regeneration of a nation. Malaria is still our greatest menace. We hope that before long this country will show some signs of improvement through the anti-malaria campaign, as the stamina of the people has been undermined by the serious incidence of this disease. Money should not also be stinted to stamp out other diseases like hookworm and aphthisis, which are fast undermining the vitality of the nation. A proper health survey of the Island is, in our opinion, imperative to evolve well-considered health measures, and combat the ravages of diseases. The appalling rate of infant mortality, which is one of the highest in the world, is a serious blot on the efficiency of our medical machinery. A more liberal policy should be pursued in the establishment of a greater number of dispensaries, hospitals, clinics, child welfare centres ; and the employment of more medical men, to carry out a vigorous health drive, will accordingly be necessary. The majority of the people of the country still have great faith in the ayurvedic system of medicine, and they often have recourse to this method of treatment. We would wish to add, this system should be given greater encouragement; and also that all possible steps be taken to spread its usefulness. Under existing conditions, all children attending school are examined by the Officers of the Medical Department. No provision has however been made for the treatment of these children for their ailments. We would commend that early steps be taken to give the necessary treatment after such examination. The housing problem also needs attention. Other countries have advanced considerably in this direction. European countries have thus provided thousands of persons with clean and sanitary modern homes. We need more building societies in Ceylon. But the Government and

self-governing local bodies should have their own schemes for the housing of their own labourers. Something should also be done, but very gradually, to improve the housing conditions in the village areas all over the country. The sanitary conditions of housing in the large towns leave room for considerable improvements.

It is the birthright of every child to have a proper elementary education. Although vast strides have been made in working towards the achievement of this end, it is regrettable to record that there are still nearly a hundred thousand children for whom no educational facilities have been provided. This is a serious reproach to the good government of this country. In certain quarters there is an outcry that too much money is being spent on education If facts are carefully examined, one will see the futility and the fallacy of such an assumption. Our aim should be to make the entire nation literate. This could not be achieved in a few years, but judicious expenditure of money spread over a reasonable number of years, upon well-conceived schemes of education, will bring about the desired result Educational experts are definitely of opinion that the medium of instruction should be in the mother-tongue. We, therefore, consider that in Ceylon, which possesses a mixed population, mainly of Sinhalese and Tamils, English should form a second language in the curriculum of our schools, and instruction should be imparted in the mother-tongue. English being the official language, we should aim at giving a free primary education to every child. Particularly in the case of some of the poor who possess intellectual qualities, further opportunity should be afforded to pursue a course of higher education by the method of scholarships. It is very desirable that a Sinhalese child should be taught Tamil as a third language, and a Tamil, Sinhalese as a third language. This would apply with equal force even to a Muslim child. I am of opinion that an educational system, directed on these lines, will greatly mitigate the existence of communal differences, as there would be a better mutual understanding of the culture, customs and manners of the three principal races living in this country.

It has become the common practice for the educationalists of today to vehemently denounce the present system of education; but strange to say, very little helpful criticism has emanated from such sources. We must appreciate the fact that the present system of education had its beginning about a century ago, and, with the passage of time, the system has, up to now, adapted itself to the needs of the community. We would point out that the system requires drastic changes if it is to adapt itself to the changed conditions which require a greater vocational bias. The inordinate delay in the establishment of a University has given a setback to secondary education. Our secondary schools today have to cater to the requirements of the outside universities, resulting in the control of the whole system of secondary education by foreign standards. The University is indispensable to the proper development of our cultural needs. Its early establishment is of the utmost importance to the future development of our educational life. Another aspect of education is the need to find a solution to remove illiteracy among the adults. This is as important as educating the children in a system of national reawakening; and we trust early action will be taken to adequately tackle this problem too. Ceylon is rich in its archaeological remains, and it is the duty of the State to conserve and preserve these monuments as a national heritage. The present vandalism that is being practised should definitely be stopped, and measures be taken to preserve intact this valuable national asset.

It is gratifying to note that the principle of feeding of schoolchildren by providing a midday meal at school has been endorsed by the State Council; but we consider the money provision totally inadequate to feed all children in attendance at schools. We appreciate the difficulty in evolving a scheme which will be found satisfactory and acceptable to the majority. We trust the Executive Committee of Education will address themselves to the task; and will adopt a scheme that will work to the benefit of as large a number of children as possible. We hope in future years it would be possible to vote sufficient money for the feeding of all children.

The development of local government occupies an 122
important place in a national scheme of development. The progress so far made cannot be considered commensurate with our needs. A substitute for archaic institutions like Sanitary Boards is long overdue, and a more democratic and advanced method of local administration should be devised to replace the Sanitary Board The Village Committees which are scattered throughout the Island are unable to function efficiently and discharge their obligations, owing to lack of funds; and also restrictions placed upon them in regard to the administration of whatever funds are at their disposal. We require an impetus towards the rapid development of local government institutions, as it is a well recognised fact that local self-government is an essential preliminary to responsible government

The inordinate delay in formulating proposals on the Headmen Commission Report has given cause for suspicion in the country. The Report of the Commission was published over a year ago and the country has been eagerly awaiting the introduction of a reform of the headmen system Those responsible for the placing of proposals before the country should feel that they have been seriously lacking in their sense of duty. We would point out that the matter is of sufficient public importance to warrant early action.

The country was made to believe that a scheme of Rural Reconstruction would be launched at an early date, under the auspices of Government · but up to now, no practical steps have been taken for the inauguration of such a scheme. The scheme is an essential need to raise the standard of village life, which is at present at a very low ebb; s the villager is desperate, and has no immediate hopes r the future. This is a very disquieting state of affairs, d delay will only result in a serious national deterioran. This is a problem that should be grappled with statesnlike promptitude.

is regrettable to note that Government is gradually ting away from the avowed policy of temperance. This y was the result of an organised public opinion which

started about twenty-five years ago, and made its influence felt throughout the length and breadth of the Island. In certain quarters there is a belief that a stimulus should be given to the coconut industry by the encouragement of the production of liquor, not only for local consumption but also for export. This , I submit, is a fallacy and time alone will demonstrate the soundness of my point of view. The Congress views with great concern any attempts to increase the quantity of liquor produced for consumption in this Island, and requests the Government to introduce a quota system for the gradual restriction of the import of foreign liquor and in the production of locally manufactured liquor.

We record with satisfaction that our demand for the appointment of a Commission to investigate into the restriction of immigration has become an accomplished fact. The Congress submitted a Memorandum and supported it by further oral evidence. As the matter is *sub judice* I do not wish to express any further views at this stage and I feel that the inquiry is in able hands. I trust that satisfactory conclusions will be arrived at which will find a solution to a vexed problem in this country.

The conditions of labour in this country are far from satisfactory as compared with conditions in other countries. The Congress is of opinion that these conditions greatly determine the standard of living and general happiness of the labouring classes. Their upliftment is an essential ingredient in the furtherance of a programme of national reconstruction, and a proper inquiry should be instituted in determining what constitutes a reasonable living wage. The fixation of hours of work is also considered desirable and we would recommend this for the consideration of government.

Ceylonese have been lacking in enterprise in trade and commerce, the life-blood of a nation. No nation can claim to have progressed without having played a significant part in the development of trade and commerce of a country. There is a mistaken notion that Ceylonese are not by nature

inclined to take to these spheres of activity. Here again it is not due to disinclination on the part of Ceylonese but owing to the lack of capital and credit facilities. The Banking Commission recommended that a State Aided Bank be established, but for reasons yet unknown to the public the Bank has not seen the light of day; and the far-reaching benefits which would have been conferred by such an institution have been denied those engaged in agricultural, industrial and commercial pursuits.

I now proceed to deal with the proposed Loan Policy of Government. The national debt of this country compares very favourably with other countries of a similar status No country can hope to progress without an investment of money on projects that will lay the foundations for future returns; but at the same time, such funds should be applied on well-conceived schemes by the application of a process of elimination of such schemes as are of a doubtful value. Our current revenue is insufficient to meet the current expenditure which has to be met for the carrying out of national services. The interest and Sinking Fund have to be met out of current revenue. Unless due caution is exercised, these payments might become a drain upon our national services. The interest and Sinking Fund have to be met out of current revenue. Unless due caution is exercised, these payments might become a drain upon our national finances. We trust that our financial experts have not lost sight of this contingency arising.

The Congress has persistently demanded that a revision of the incidence of taxation is necessary. The poor of this country have been called upon to bear more than their fair share of this burden. Import duties on articles of food and other necessaries of life require revision. We make a strong demand that adequate relief should be granted.

The Congress is of opinion that the process of Ceylonization of the services has been slow. Where Ceylonese young men of intellectual attainments and proved capacity are available, we demand that preference should be given to them, as against non-Ceylonese. Our young men have

no other country to look up to for employment. It is, therefore, the duty of the Government to absorb them into the services of this country when suitable posts are available.

A proper network of roads is essential for the development of the country. It is the duty of Government to recognise the needs of those engaged in both agricultural and industrial pursuits by providing adequate transport facilities. Particularly inter-district communications should be encouraged; and an efficient telephone service plays no small part in linking up the remote parts of the island and bringing them within easy reach of businessmen.

The increase of crime is appalling, for there were no less than 295 murders committed in 1935, as against 255 the previous year. This is a serious indictment of a dangerous tendency in this country. It is mainly the serious economic situation which has led to a manifestation of these criminal tendencies; although other factors, such as illiteracy and an impulsive nature, have also contributed to this result. We feel that the co-operation of religious agencies with government in an attempt to suppress crime is needed. Every right minded person should make it a duty to extend this co-operation in a movement calculated to suppress crime.

There has been a renaissance of national art, music and drama, and also creative literature in many parts of the East, notably in India; and all this has been the outcome of a great national movement. The traditions of Ceylon are in no way inferior to those of India, and an impetus to revive art and music should manifest itself in this country, too, under favourable circumstances. The National Congress hopes that in the coming year, it would render possible a similar movement throughout the Island. We hope that national customs, too, will find their due place in such a scheme.

Fellow delegates, ladies and gentlemen, I hope I have not taken too much of your time in dealing with the vital problems of this country. I also hope that in these considerations you will have a stimulus to serious reflection on your personal obligations to contribute to their solutions.

I am encouraged in the hope of general co-operation this year. The Governor's words at the Caledonian dinner are an indication of what we all desire should be the attitude of all communities. His Excellency said: "I think that the country has shown that it could take its part and share in the administration of its affairs. We might congratulate ourselves on the way in which the pol tical education of the country has been advanced." His Excellency went on to further state that it was the duty of Europeans in this country to take greater interest and help in the political development of this country. These are significant words, and we appreciate these sentiments expressed by His Excellency. Knowing as we do the sympathy he has for the aspirations of this counrty, we feel confident that His Excellency will translate these words into action. There is a silver lining on every dark cloud, and it is a solace to us that the Official Head of the administration of this country should have uttered these words, which are an unsolicited testimonial of the capacity of Ceylonese to manage their own affairs.

I hope that all communities will take their cue from His Excellency's words, and give us tangible proof that they are anxious to fulfil that part which His Excellency thinks is due by them to this country, which they have adopted as their permanent home. Eeach community has its own particular contribution to make to the welfare of this country. We need all the support we can get. We have set out to serve no selfish or narrow ends. It is because of this fact that we are confident that we can win your generous support. We have great objects for which to work. There is something noble and inspiring in service. The records of every country prove that its advance had been the work, not of isolated groups of individuals, but of men who lead, and the masses who respond to the call of the country. We must by now have done with the internecine disputes of the past for ever. They are a dark shadow which must be dissipated. We owe it to ourselves to forget the past. The future is crowded with possibilities of achievement. We have laid our hands to the plough and cannot look

back. There is so much to do that we cannot afford to have a single idle hand which might be utilized for the benefit of the suffering masses. Every community has its own stake in the prosperity of the country. They will not deny this obvious truth. No emotion in the human heart can be more generous and disinterested than the dedication of one's best endeavours to the welfare of a country. We have faced good and ill times together. Can we not stand, shoulder to shoulder, for the future; and remould this country's destiny nearer to the heart's desire?

We see no reason why other political parties, as long as their creed is the attainment of Responsible Government, should be unwilling to co-operate with us in obtaining the common objects we all have in view. The future of the country lies in the hands of its youth. It is they who will have to carry the torch from the failing hands of this generation; and they must now bestir themselves and respond and rally round the banner of Congress. In England, Germany and other places, the youth of these countries are yearning to do all they can for their country. They are moved by a spirit of manly patriotism. They have reached to [*sic*] the stature of heroes. It is not possible to pass on the responsibility of service from one's self to others. Each individual has his part to play; and whether he does it ill or well, he has added to or taken from the collective conscience of the community, of which he forms a part. I appeal to the youth of Ceylon, therefore, to do all they can to make this country all the better for their having done their duty generously and well. The youth of this country have a great heritage from the past. They must enrich it by their own actions, and pass it on to the next generation.

Congress represents the most progressive ideals of political life in this country. We have done our duty in the past, and we shall do so in the future. We make no empty protestations. We present a clear record for all to read. We have established the right to ask for the goodwill, co-operation and assistance of all in realising the political aspirations of this country. Suspicion begets cause for

suspicion, until all possibility of amity is finally destroyed. But confidence also begets confidence; and happy is that country in which this quality prevails amongst all communities. No one deny that the Congress has stood the most trying tests, and that through all vicissitudes of public life, the ideals which were set out in its creed, originally, have been maintained unimpaired. This is a pledge of our sincerity that the aims which the founders laid down as fundamental conditions for the co-operation of all communities, before any strife or rumour of strife had appeared, have been maintained, firmly and indissolubly throughout our long history. This policy we will maintain until the goal of responsible government is reached. We have a programme and a definite policy; and I shall adhere to the principles of Congress in every particular, thus following the great precedent set by my predecessors in office. In view of all that I have said, you will agree with me that Congress during the past has worked wholeheartedly, and will continue to do so, for the benefit of this country which has an indefeasible claim upon our willing services, our unswerving loyalties, and our undivided devotion in the maintenance and extension of its common good.

When I lay down the reins of office at the end of the coming year, I hope that Congress will have grown into a powerful body, commensurate with its claim upon your service and the widespread needs of the country; and that I shall cherish, as one of the tenderest and most inspiring memories of my life, the part I have played in restoring Congress to the place which is its due.

For serving this common good of the country, by building the Congress upon firm foundations, I can do no better than quote to you the memorable words of Ruskin:

> Let us think that we build for ever. Let it not be for present delight, nor for present use alone; let it be such work as our descendants will thank us for; and let us think, as we lay stone on stone, that a time is to come, when these stones will be held sacred

> because our hands have touched them ; and that men will say, as they look upon the labour and wrought substance of them: 'See, this our fathers did for us!'

Fellow delegates, ladies and gentlemen, I thank you again most sincerely from the bottom of my heart for the patient hearing which you have accorded to me on this occasion.

After the address by the President, several resolutions were moved.

Change in Constitution

Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara moved the following resolution :

> In pursuance of Article 12 of the rules of the Ceylon National Congress, this Congress resolves to adopt the new Constitution of the Congress as submitted by the Executive Committee.

The Executive Committee in the proposed constitution termed Congress the "Ceylon National Congress Party." Mr. Kannangara said that without organisation and discipline no association or body could progress. It was well known that the Ceylon National Congress was responsible for the reform of the Const tution. If any other organisation claimed to have done so, it was wholly untrue.

Today the administration of the country could be said to be in the hands of the people of the country. Time was when they had only one elected representative in Council, but now they had fifty elected by the people. It was time now that they changed the constitution of the Congress. If anyone found himself in disagreement with the principles of Congress he should leave Congress and not act treacherously, still remaining within the Congress fold. Anyone who wished to remain in Congress must give it his undivided loyalty. Everybody spoke of the weakness of Congress today. But those very people depended on the strength of that weakness prior to a general election.

Back to the Fold

Mr. Timothy de Silva, seconding the resolution, sa d that he was one of the foundation members of Congress. Though he had lost confidence in those who latterly worked the Congress, he remained loyal and now that many of those who had risen to prominence by hanging on to the coat-tails of Congress were trying to deal it a death blow, he felt it his duty to come forth and stand by Congress at this trying time.

In regard to the constitution of Congress he could say that no one could take exception to the objects of Congress. The Congress invited the active co-operation of all communities for the attainment of that goal. The proposed change in the constitution of the Congress was the right step for the present.

Mr. W. A. de Silva was opposed to the reform of the Congress constitution. The Congress had obtained the present constitution by its efforts in the past and they were satisfied with the present constitution. It would be unwise to change it for the sake of meeting of [sic] temporary difficulty.

Mr. D. G. Weerasinghe (Madampe) spoke in support. Mr. L. M. Gooneratne opposed the motion.

Congress Claim

Mr. D. S. Senanayake said that the reforms they had so far achieved had been the work of the National Congress. Although the Congress might not be so strong as it used to be, it was still stronger than any other political body existing in Ceylon today. His own belief was that there would not be any other body, in the future, that would be able to get what the Congress had obtained for the country.

Mr. Kumarapathirana welcomed the formation of the Congress Party as it tended to strengthen the hands of Congress candidates at the elections.

Mr. G. C. S. Corea said that if a party were not formed they would not be able to carry on the work of the Congress. There was no need to change the name of Congress just because a party was formed. In articles 1 to 6 the word "Party" might be omitted and the words "Ceylon National Congress" remain. The formation of a party enabled individuals to join the Congress whose membership was now confined to affiliated sabhas and other political bodies. The suggestion of Mr. Corea was adopted and the resolution was passed unanimously.

The sessions at this stage was adjourned for lunch, and resumed later at 2 p.m.

Reforms Resolutions

Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa moved the following resolution:

The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that in pursuance of its declared policy immediate steps should be taken for the introduction of a system of full parliamentary government for Ceylon.

Mr. R. Kuruwita Gunasekera seconded. Mr. Kumarapathirana spoke in support. Carried unanimously.

Mr. S. R. Wijemanne moved the following resolution:

The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that the further participation of Ceylon in a scheme of Imperial Preference is detrimental to the economic well-being of the Island.

Mr. M. G. Karunaratne seconded. Carried.

Mr. G. G. Punchihewa (Nawalapitiya) moved the following resolution:

That Indian estate labourers enjoying the franchise under the Ceylon State Council Order-in-Council of 1931 be made subject to all existing laws of the country.

Mr. M. M. Percy Silva (Nawalapitiya) seconded.

Minister Opposed

Mr. D. S. Senanayake said he could not agree with the mover in the solution he suggests in order to keep the immigrant labourer away from the political field. By some ingenious way the names of Indian labourers had been registered in the list of voters. If they insisted on making him pay the V C. tax and other taxes they could only be strengthening his claims for other privileges.

For instance, the Indians might demand rights under the new Land Development Ordinance which excluded immigrants from the settlement schemes. What should be done was to see that government does not register those who were not entitled to registration according to the Donoughmore Commission's Scheme. He opposed the resolution.

Mr. D. A. Jayasinghe (Kalutara) also opposed the resolution. He said that the people of the country had suffered enough by the exploitation of foreigners. If the immigrant labourers were forced to pay the V.C. tax and other dues, it would mean the beginning of the end of their nation.

The resolution was withdrawn.

Mr. D. R. Jayawardene moved the following resolution:

That in view of the acute economic situation and the consequent increase of unemployment in the country, government should take immediate steps to introduce a well considered scheme of State-aided industrial development.

Dr. A. A. Gunatilleke (Chilaw) seconded. Mr. H. G. Ratnawardena (Avissawella) supported. Carried.

The following Executive Committee was elected for 1937: [here follows a list of the members which has been reproduced on p. 44].

30 : C. Appendix to the Eighteenth Annual Sessions

(1) Ceylon Daily News Editorial, 21 December 1936: "The Decline of Politics"

Speaking on a resolution at the sessions of the National Congress held on Saturday, the Minister of Agriculture said that even if the Congress was not much nowadays it was still the most important political body in the country, or words to that effect. That indeed is the unhappiest feature of the public life of Ceylon. The Congress, it is true, does not seek to outbid the callow coteries who make it their business to inflame the masses with tendencious propaganda of an alien brand. But the decline of the Congress is a true index of the public attitude to politics and politicians. Not so long ago the best minds of the country were drawn naturally into public life and the incentive of office or seats in the legislature was not deemed necessary for them to do so. A session of the Congress was then an event of no mean importance. It is very well to say that the reform of the Constitution was due to the Congress, but does anyone think that the slightest notice would have been taken of the Congress if it was always an opportunists' paradise ? The bold imagination and constructive ability of Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, the wise statesmanship of Sir James Peiris, the keen mind and self-effacing work of Mr. Samerawickrame and the trenchant and vigorous utterances of Mr. H. J. C. Pereira made the Congress a power in the land and an instrument for wresting political liberties. They and others of an equal sincerity lifted politics from the rut of mediocrity and mendacity. What has happened since ?

Year by year the Congress has been made use of by self-seeking politicians and when it served their purpose they cast it aside like an old garment. Neither the ability to think out a national program of work nor the skill to present it with force and lucidity are today regarded as necessary conditions for leadership. A hardy annual at the Congress sessions is a discussion directed towards the formation of a Congress party ; and again, no one, not even

31. NINETEENTH ANNUAL SESSIONS, 18 DECEMBER 1937

31:A. *Minutes of the Sessions*

Summary of work done at the annual sessions of the Congress held on the 18th of December, 1937 at the Ananda College Hall.

The work of the sessions began with an address of welcome by the Chairman of the Reception Committee—Mr. W. R. Wijemanne

The President, Mr. H. W Amarasuriya, then delivered his presidential address.

The following resolutions were then moved:

1. The Ceylon National Congress is strongly of opinion that Ceylon should be granted full responsible government and requests the Board of Ministers and the State Council to take immediate steps to attain that object before the next General Election.

Proposed by Mr. Roland E. W. Perera and seconded by Mr. E. Y. Abeygunawardena. Carried unanimously.

2. The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that legislation should be introduced to make it obligatory for all local bodies to contribute towards the cost of primary education in their respective areas.

Proposed by Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa and seconded by Mr. W. F. B. Perera. Carried unanimously.

3. The Ceylon National Congress requests Government to appoint a Commission to examine and report on its present excise policy.

Proposed by Mr. M. R. Perera and seconded by Mr. L. S. Fernando. Carried unanimously.

human beings, and in their native soil, owe it to themselves to use even a small part of their leisure to the study of some aspect of public affairs. If the government of the country passes into the hands of *nincompoops or wreckers*, it will be because the saner elements of the community shun public affairs through a misapprehension of their responsibilities. There is a solid body of talent at the bar and elsewhere with the necessary leisure which could profitably be employed in the study of serious problems affecting the country's future. A seat in the State Council does not carry the stamp of achievement and many persons enter that chamber without the passport of knowledge and ability. But everyone capable of doing so can take a useful part in the task of instructing and moulding public opinion.

course of his presiden ial address at the nineteenth annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held on Saturday at the Ananda College Hall.

Mr. Amarasuriya was at the time dealing with critics who, he said, had condemned and charged the Ministers with "mal-administration of the finances" of the island. The Congress view, he explained, was that the poor were called upon to have a heavy burden of taxes. The Congress was strongly opposed to the improper and undue exploitation of the poor who have to struggle hard for their existence. On the subject of constitutional reform, Mr. Amarasuriya suggested a round table conference of all political parties.

Among those present [at the sessions] were: Sir D B. Jayatilaka, Messrs. C. W. W. Kannangara, John A. Pye (Secretary of the European Association of Ceylon), J. N. Jinendradasa, Dr. K. J. D Silva, Roland E. W. Perera, P. D. S. Jayasekera and Victor C. Perera. In the absence of Mr. D S. Senanayake, Mr. W. R. Wijemanne welcomed the delegates.

W. R. Wijemanne's Address

Friends and brother delegates,

In rising to address you as Chairman of the Reception Committee, at this 18th [sic] annual session of the Ceylon National Congress, I should at first mention that it was hat patriot Mr. D. S Senanayake who was to address you s Chairman of the Reception Committee. However, as he as be called away on some important official business ddenly, our President has compelled me to take his place. though I feel I was not competent to undertake the task, , in obedience to the order issued on me by the President, d no other course but to obey the behest. I consider that s the bounden duty of every member of Congress to

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his is [illegible] in a neat hand on a separate sheet of paper (with the printed " Highlands, " Panadura) which is attached to the report. The speech [illegible] errors in language struct re which we have not attempted to , or rectify. The CDN news item does not provide any part of jemanne's speech.

4. The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that Government should devote more attention to research in paddy with a view to its extensive cultivation both in the wet and dry zones of the Island.

Proposed by Mr. Clement Dias and seconded by Mr. I. B. Dissanayake. Carried unanimously.

5. The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that a Commission should be appointed to examine and report on the incidence of taxation with a view to relieving the poor of the heavy burden of taxation.

Proposed by Mr. S. H. Jayatilleke and seconded by Mr. W. R. Wijemanne. Carried unanimously.

Mr. Victor C. Perera, the Hony. Joint Secretary, read the Annual Report.

Mr. D. R. Jayawardene, the Hony. Treasurer, read the Statement of Accounts which was duly adopted.

The delegates were the guests of the President at lunch.

The following were appointed members of the Executive Committee: [The list is presented on pp. 45-46].

Victor C. Perera,
Joint Hony. Secretary.

H. W. Amarasuriya,
President.
21.1.38

31 : B. Draft Report on the Sessions[1]

The Ministers and the State Council would come out with flying colours if any inquiry were held into the working of the Constitution, declared Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya in the

1. C.N.A., 60/97; a handwritten manuscript for the most part. The report appeared in the *CDN*, 20 December 1937. The headlines provided in the draft and followed by the *CDN* read:
Flying Colours for Ministers
Congress President on Financial Policy
Relief for Poor Taxpayers Wanted.

appeared to be satisfied with what the Congress had already achieved. The real aim of the Congress being the attainment of the complete freedom managing the affairs of Ceylon by its people for the better weal and happiness of the people, the stage of political development so far reached is far remote to what the wise organisors [sic] of the Congress contemplated in establishing the institution. We have still a long way to go. I shall therefore take this opportunity to appeal to all Congressmen to rally round the Congress again and put their whole heart and soul together in regaining its previous position.

The National Congress is the only political body in Ceylon where every community, every creed, and every class can collectively work together and amicably settle any differences, if any such differences exist. Communal and other discriminations are bound to agravate [sic] by working under separate compartments with the result that the welfare of the country as a whole suffer thereby. It is the common duty of every individual, whether belonging to major or minor communities, who really loves the prosperity of Mother Lanka, to work for the country as a whole in preference of his individual community, as the achievement of that which brings about the welfare of the whole population of the country necessarily must improve the condition of the various constituents that form the whole simultaneously.

I should like to refer to certain communal cries that are again heard, though confined to some reactionaries of one or two so called minor communities. They are nothing more than cries in the wilderness intended to mislead the authorities. However it is the duty of the Congress to take timely notice of the mischief that is likely to be caused by these reactionaries and adopt such measures as will not mislead the new Governor in respect of the real attitude of the masses in the country, who are far from communal minded in regard to the political development of the country.

It was only the other day that our new Governor, Sir Andrew Caldecott, at a certain prize-giving in Colombo expressed the necessity for the minority communities to have confidence in the major community. It is hoped that the minority communities would take this noble advice of His Excellency and act in such manner as to create that mutual confidence among all communities which is the essential preliminary condition necessary for all communities to pull together and work for the common welfare of Mother Lanka. It is needless to say that the major community has always acted in all matters in such manner as to create confidence in the minority communities, but to satisfy reactionaries is of course a difficult problem. To create mutual confidence among the different communities in the island, a common platform is the best remedy. I therefore make an earnest appeal from the Congress platform to all communities to rally round the Congress, which is an institution not confined to any community, creed or class but open to all communities, and work together as one Ceylonese nation with complete confidence in each other for the betterment of their common motherland.

I now call upon Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya, the new President of Congress, to take the chair of the Congress sessions today.

H. W. Amarasuriya's Presidential Address

Fellow delegates and friends,

I heartily join in the welcome extended to you in a fitting manner by the Chairman of the Reception Committee. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for assembling in such large numbers in spite of great personal inconvenience.

The Ceylon National Congress enters upon the 19th year of its existence. I consider it a proud privilege and a singular honour that you have conferred upon me in

1. Available as a typed manuscript attached to the draft report. The CDN item, again, is a much more concise version of his typewritten address, with several paragraphs omitted.

re-electing me your President for the third year in succession. I can assure you that it was not without hesitation and a considerable degree of reluctance that I consented to remain in office for a further period as I am not unconscious of the great responsibilities and the arduous duties your President has to discharge. In accepting office, let me frankly confess that I was actuated by no other motive but a sense of duty and a desire to serve my country as best as possible and to further the cause for which the Ceylon National Congress was founded.

I invite you to join with me and extend your helping hand freely to guide the varied activities of Congress I feel confident that with your ready co-operation, goodwill and sympathy the Congress will be able to achieve some of those ideals. I am anxiously looking forward to a year of development and expansion in all sphere of activities.

During the past two years the Congress has experienced a very difficult period of its existence and I am pleased to place on record that due to the loyal co-operation of several Congressmen, I have been able to rescue this body, which is the oldest political association, from entire extinction. I owe a debt of gratitude to those who stood loyally by the Congress. Today we can proudly acclaim that the Ceylon National Congress is a live and robust movement regaining the confidence of the country and the one political association that extends its scope of activities to all shades of opinion, irrespective of race, caste, creed or colour.

During the past several years the Congress addressed itself mainly to the question of constitutional reform and less attention was obviously paid to urgent needs of a domestic nature. I am strongly of opinion that the time has come, whilst pursuing that avowed policy for an urgent and immediate reform of the Donoughmore Constitution, equally important it is to undertake a comprehensive programme of work and to organise public opinion in the country in regard to questions of national importance. Our work should be extended and brought within the reach of every man.

It is a regrettable fact that there is strong evidence of general apathy and stagnation in the country and unless we realise this and a change of heart is made it would be almost impossible to retrieve the lost ground and march forward. The founders of the National Congress were men of vision and they laboured in the interest of posterity. They had as their ideal those fundamental objects which are contained in Article 1 of the Congress:

> The aim of the Ceylon National Congress is to secure for the people responsible government and the status of a self-governing member of the British Empire. This end is to be achieved by constitutional methods, by a reform of the existing system of government and administration, by a vigorous development of self-governing institutions and by organising and fostering the intellectual, moral and economic resources of the country.

I can do no better than commend to you these fundamental principles and to ask you to translate them into action by galvanising all possible forces and energy, and [to] work with zeal and enthusiasm towards the realization and attainment of these ideals.

I make bold to state that the National Congress has been consistently loyal to its creed. It has always placed in the forefront of its programme the need for political reform. I do not propose to deal at length on this aspect of our work as I have fairly fully dealt with it in regard to reforms in my previous addresses. Suffice it to say, that the urgency for a reform of the Constitution is becoming more and more pronounced as glaring and obvious defects of the Donoughmore Constitution are a common feature in the administration of government. Instances have not been unknown where serious differences have occurred between elected Ministers and the three Officers of State and the Governor. The very existence of such differences of opinion have retarded national progress, and the smooth working of the Constitution has been undermined. The country has given the Donoughmore Constitution a very fair trial and an unbiased critic of the Constitution will admit that without

a radical change of the fundamental principles underlying it no satisfactory results could be achieved with the best will in the world to make it function as a perfect system of government.

The Congress reaffirms its demand for full responsible government and requests the immediate amendment of the Constitution in these aspects.

(1) Removal of the Officers of State and their substitution by elected Ministers.

(2) The strengthening of the position of the Board of Ministers, enabling them to initiate policies, control finance and the [sic] execution of such policies unhampered.

(3) Alteration in the method of the election of Ministers.

(4) The reconstitution of the Public Services Commission in accordance with the recommendations made in the Reform Memorandum submitted by the Board of Ministers.

(5) The deletion of the relevant Articles in the present Order-in-Council requiring the prior sanction of the Governor in the case of bills, motions, resolutions or votes affecting public servants.

(6) The restriction of the special powers of the Governor.

I consider it hardly necessary to enter into a discussion of these very essential changes as the views of Congress supported by the Board of Ministers have been before the country for a considerable time. But I would wish to state, having given the matter full consideration, that the Congress is not prepared to accept anything short of these demands which in our opinion are the minimum acceptable to those who stand for a reform of the Constitution.

Recent events indicate that a small minority are still making a futile attempt to retard progress and obstruct the realisation of the aspirations of the cou

emancipation. May I therefore appeal to those, particularly the intelligent and the wealthy sections of the community, not to impede the path of progress but to sink all personal prejudices and differences and join hands with us to fight the political die-hards and demonstrate to the British public that Ceylonese are capable of managing their own affairs, and [to] bring happiness to all the people inhabiting this Island by the inauguration of a system of government in keeping with the genius of the people.

I do not wish to rest contented by this mere expression of a pious hope but prefer to make a suggestion for the consideration of our political pundits. I am convinced beyond any shadow of doubt that the persistent agitation by certain sections of the community against political advancement is based on unfounded fears and due to the existence of suspicion, distrust and misapprehensions among the various communities. It is time, I think, to organise a "Round table conference" with a view to ascertaining various points of view and to bring about a better understanding of what true national problems are. I commend this proposal and trust it will receive the serious consideration of all political parties. Personally I consider a conference of the type suggested would result in the attainment of objects we strive for.

I now propose to deal quite briefly with the next resolution on the agenda. It relates to an important change in the educational policy of the country. Recently there has been an outcry in the country that a very large amount is spent on education. Out of a revenue of a little over 100 million rupees no less than twenty million rupees is applied for purposes of education. I do not consider that this proportion is too large considering that there are still nearly one hundred thousand children scattered throughout the Island for whom no provision has been made to impart even a primary education. In this respect the government has failed in an elementary duty which every state owes to its children. But we appreciate the magnitude of the task and feel that it was time that local bodies undertook some reasonable share of the burden. In most

civilised countries the local authorities have realised their sense of duty towards the younger generation and have introduced special education rates We consider a satisfactory solution to the present high cost of education to the central government would be to introduce legislation empowering local authorities to contribute towards the cost of primary education We are aware of the many difficulties in Ceylon, where the local bodies are still in an infant stage, but the Congress is confident that with a progressive Minister of Local Administration supported by a capable Committee [sic] will evolve a scheme and relieve the central government of some financial burden The National Congress advocates the introduction of both English and Tamil as second languages into the curriculum of the Sinhalese schools. We consider that a knowledge of English and Tamil in the case of Sinhalese children and English and Sinhalese in the case of Tamil children would create an interest in the culture, customs and manners of the two races and would also bring a wider outlook in life.

The Congress is pleased to place on record that preliminary steps have been taken by voting a half a million for the purpose of acquiring land for the University. At long last, after nearly twenty-five years, the establishment of the Ceylon University is in sight.

Public utterances have been made by many leadin educationists that the time is now ripe to radically chan the system of education. The country today is crowded wi unemployed educated young men due to the overcrowdi in the learned professions and timely action is desira to avoid a growing dissatisfaction lest it would bec a national calamity. Schemes for the education of ad are long overdue. More advanced forms of techn commercial and industrial instruction should find a in a national scheme of education. There is still a deal yet to be done in the sphere of education and we that the Minister of Education will find solutions to problems.

I next pass on to the third resolution dealing with the excise policy of government. A general sense of dissatisfaction exists today in the country. The government has not kept its pledges in regard to temperance. On the other hand those who are engaged in a legitimate trade in the jaggery and treacle industry are being unduly harrassed and prosecuted for excise offences. The present position, to say the least, is intolerable and an inquiry is essential to remedy this state of affairs.

The next resolution deals with research in paddy and its cultivation. The Congress generally approves of the policy adumbrated by the Minister and Committee of Agriculture. The happiness and prosperity of any country depends mainly on an adequate food supply. Sri Lanka which in the days of old was known as the " Granary of the East " is today dependent on the neighbouring continent, India, for its supply of the staple food of the people. Ceylon is spending annually over 60 million rupees for the importation of rice only. Articles of food other than rice have also to be imported in large quantities. Ceylon by its very nature is an agricultural country and there are great potentialities to make her self-sufficient. Large schemes of paddy cultivation have been undertaken, particularly in the dry zones of the Island, financed out of loan funds. The Congress lends its support to these projects. At the same time we are of opinion that greater research might be undertaken in the wet zone where a permanent population already exists and a policy of increasing the yield of paddy should be explored. Modern scientific methods and intensive cultivation would be beneficial, if properly conducted. The policy of giving state aid to colonists and peasant proprietors should be more liberally applied. The present method of giving such aid has been found wanting and a system of more frequent visits by agricultural instructors and [sic] placing their knowledge at the disposal of the cultivator is most essential for the promotion of the paddy industry. Animal husbandry, rotation of crops and the growing of fruits are important in a comprehensive scheme of agriculture.

The next resolution is an important one and it touches the very root of the economic life of the people. Ceylon is a very The return out of customs still forms the bulk of the revenue towards which the poor contribute in no small measure. When direct taxation by the introduction of income tax was advocated hopes were held out to the poor that an adequate measure of relief would be granted by the remission of taxes, particularly on articles of food and other necessaries of life like clothing. But in reality what happened was just the opposite as an increase of ten per cent all round was imposed against severe opposition in order to balance the budget in the year 1932 Since then no appreciable remission has been made. The Congress is strongly opposed to the improper and undue exploitation of the poor who have to struggle hard for their very existence.

We request government to institute a proper investigation and evolve a more equitable form of taxation. The Congress also considers that taxation generally has reached a saturation point. Therefore the remedy lies in reducing the expenditure on the public services of the country The personal emoluments bill today is something enormous and is well over 60 per cent of the total expenditure. It is obvious that the country is being unduly taxed to maintain a highly paid public service. A speedier Ceylonisation of the servic and the fixing of all salaries on a rupee basis within th capacity of the tax payer to pay are a few of the ways which this problem could be solved. The rate at which t cost has risen during the past 10 years presents an interc ing study and considering the many national problems th have to grappled seriously and properly it may not possible to curtail the expansion of departments. This r necessarily make the question of the salaries a live is and unless and until this vexed question of control o public services is settled, matters affecting the interc the permanent population are likely to remain unsolv many years to come.

I would crave your indulgence to refer very briefly to some of the more important matters that the Congress has taken an abiding interest in the past and have [*sic*] carried on a persistent agitation for the fulfilment of those cherished hopes. The Congress is strongly of opinion that the present health services are quite inadequate for the growing population and early steps should be taken by the Minister for Health to provide more and better hospitals, treatment centres, dispensaries, child-welfare clinics and other facilities. We appreciate the fact that the Minister and his Committee have recently extended the medical services. But the Congress feels that owing to the widespread prevalence of malaria, hookworm, aphthisis (tuberculosis) and other diseases, the poor are subject to their attendant dangers and the vitality of the population is undermined. The alarming high rate of mortality, especially among infants, requires careful consideration and early steps should be taken to remedy this sad state of affairs.

It is gratifying to note that the Minister for Health and his Committee are giving considerable encouragement to the re-organisation of the indigenous system of medicine. The Congress urges on the Minister to give greater assistance for the promotion of ayurveda, as nearly eighty percent of the masses still have faith and recourse to this method of treatment.

I venture to submit that the Congress has failed to keep in the forefront of its programme of work the need for the harnessing of the economic resources of this country which is an essential factor in a scheme of national development. A recent survey of the economic conditions in several villages of the Kalutara District have led to startling disclosures. The earning capacity of the average man is very small and an intensive scheme of rural development and the provision of regular work to [*sic*] the indigenous population are of the utmost importance in order to achieve success.

Cottage industries like weaving, pottery, lacquer work, tortoise shell, ebony, lace making etc. should be organized on more up to date lines and the facilities for their marketing should be provided by the government The policy of state aid to industries has been accepted by the Stat Council and the Congress is firmly of opinion that the principle of co-operative methods should be adopted for the ed scheme of industrial development.

The Congress urges on the Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce to place before the country a well consider ed scheme of industrial development

Commerce and trade are the life blood of a nation and unless a fair proportion of the Island's trade is controlled by Ceylonese the task of achieving economic independence would appear to be futile The establishment of greater credit facilities and the promotion of limited liability companies to engage in these business pursuits should in my opinion receive attention of the Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce. We feel confident that with a Minister with progressive ideas, and the necessary driving force behind him, at the helm of affairs, trade and commerce will make headway.

The Congress from its very inception agitated for a vigorous development of self governing institutions On the las occasion I expressed a sense of disappointment that n change of a far reaching nature had been inaugurated b the Minister of Local Administration and his Committe But today, I am in a position to offer the congratulations the Congress to the Minister for having piloted through State Council the new Village Committee Ordinance. T Ordinance is a landmark in the history of village c mittee administration and it has conferred upon the pe wider powers and a more democratic constitution. granting of the Franchise to women, the introductio land tax for the purpose of raising more revenue an better control of funds are some of the important fea A very strong demand was put forward for the ...

of Indians and granting them the franchise in village administration. The State Council considered the demand very carefully and decided not to extend the franchise to Indians as they do not form a part of the permanent population and also enjoy special privileges in regard to wages, education, medical facilities etc. We are not jealous of[1] those concessions but we maintain it would be grossly unfair and the very character of village administration would suffer in the event of any domination by the Indian population. The Congress also submits that the plea of discrimination cannot be maintained as the Ordinance seeks to retain the status quo.

The Congress would urge on the Minister to give early effect to the recommendations of the Donoughmoré Commission to establish Provincial, District and Rural Councils designed to decentralize the present system of administration. The system of rural administration as obtains today through the Kachcheries and the headmen have made the people lose confidence in democratic institutions. The work now being done in the Kachcheries should be gradually transferred to these Councils until there is no justification for the further continuance of Kachcheries.

A small beginning has been made by the State for the establishment of child welfare and maternity clinics and housing schemes in village areas. The Congress would wish to see this policy further extended and larger votes provided for these laudable objects.

The Congress would reiterate its demands for a better and more extended road service and inter-district communications. Cheap and easy transport contributes largely to even a small economic return to those engaged in agricultural and industrial pursuits. It would also develop the remotest parts of the country and bring the villagers into contact with modern civilisation. We wish also to point out that the present postal facilities are quite inadequate. There

1. Initially the words "oppose [*sic*] to" had been typed in here.

are several villages without even a receiving post office or a post box. The village population deserve greater consideration and on behalf of the inarticulate masses we make these demands.

I wish to refer to another important matter, namely the inquiry into the restriction of immigration. The Commission concluded its work nearly a year ago and the country has been anxiously awaiting the publication of its report. We regret to record the fact that the inordinate delay in dealing with this vital matter has seriously jeopardised a solution to the question of unemployment, the introduction of legislation to fix hours of work, wages, conditions of service and the general amelioration of the working classes of this country. We would earnestly invite the attention of the authorities and request that immediate steps be taken to have the report made available without further delay. A modicum of social justice demands that these questions cannot be postponed indefinitely but should be faced boldly and quick decisions arrived at. In this country we have been accustomed in the past to let matters drift, but the time has arrived to treat problems of national importance in a manner that other countries similarly situated have tackled and found satisfactory solutions.

In certain quarters the Board of Ministers have bee condemned and charged with mal-administration of th finances of the island. Some of the reactionaries have eve gone to the extent of requesting the Secretary of State f the Colonies to send out a royal commission for the purpo of reporting on the working of the constitution. I ma bold to state that if such an inquiry were to be held Ministers and the State Council would come out w flying colours. It is true that additional taxation had t imposed on the country from time to time and this bec necessary, as very little money was left to make prov for the essential national services, after meeting the s bill of public servants.

If the present rate of expansion and development is to be maintained the revenue of the country has to be increased either by improving the earning capacity of the tax-payer or by the imposition of further taxes or both. But, on the contrary, if we elect to agitate against increased taxation it would inevitably result in the curtailment of essential national services which would adversely effect the vast majority of poor people already undergoing grave privations. Is the country prepared to countenance such a state of affairs ? The answer is obviously in the negative. The country should repose some degree of confidence in those responsible for the good government of the island.

I now pass on to a matter affecting the Congress itself. Last year at the annual sessions an amendment to the constitution of the National Congress was adopted. The Executive Committee of the Congress proposes to give effect to this change gradually and it is hoped that during the ensuing year good progress will be made. You will, I expect, appreciate that it is no easy task to properly organise a political party in the short spell of one year, particularly in Ceylon where discipline has been unknown in politics. Another important factor which militated against the formation of a very powerful party was the absence of funds. I do not think we are singular in this respect. We have therefore to contend with such obstacles in our work. In the year 1935 a resolution was adopted for the creation of a "National Fund." I do not think that I need labour long to commend the need of such a fund for the furtherance of the objects for which Congress stands. We have a policy and an ambitious programme of work and the principles which underline them have been fully and eloquently expounded during the past many years. I would therefore earnestly appeal to our benefactors and well-wishers to support the Congress fund by contributing generously towards the same when started.

Fellow delegates and friends, I hope I have not unduly taxed your patience in having taken you [over] very nearly the same ground covered by me in my last address. I hope

I can confidently rely on your ready co-operation to resuscitate the position of Congress.

Let me extend on your behalf our good wishes to the new Governor, Sir Andrew Caldecott and Lady Caldecott.

The country is fortunate in having an able and experienced administrator as the official head, to guide its destinies at a critical period of the country's development. We are confident that Sir Andrew will sympathise with the aspirations of the people and will render all possible assistance to enable the attainment of those ideals.

I make an appeal to all communities living in this island and have adopted it as their home. I venture to state that every community has its own peculiar part to play and a definite contribution to make towards the advancement of the country. We implore you and solicit your support and sympathy and extend to us your hand of fellowship. We have no selfish interests to serve or sectional or communal bickerings to bind.[1] The pages of history tell us that no country has won freedom without sacrifice and without the guidance of leaders who have readily responded to the voice of the masses regardless of personal cudos [sic]. Today this country is in need of such leaders to undertake leadership and execute a big National Programme of work on an extensive scale. We also need more statesmen with a high mental calibre, integrity, character and, above all, men who are prepared to make sacrifices and lead the country to its consummate goal.

Despite jarring factions, misapprehensions and disser-sion the ideals of Congress have prevailed and have bee preserved pure and untainted. We must have all progre sive forces of the country marshalled under one banner a loyal to one creed, whatever their race, whatever th colour. I appeal to my countrymen, both within this I

and without it, not to be misled by the dicta of designing men who would export personal pride and aggrandisement to give vent to grievances, whether real or imaginary, to gain their own ends.

We see no reason why other political movements, as long as their goal is the attainment of full self-government, should demonstrate any unwillingness to join hands with us and fight shoulder to shoulder until our common object is achieved. Finally I make a special appeal to the youth of Ceylon to display a greater interest in problems effecting the country largely and to make their fair contribution towards their solution. They should be proud of the great heritage of the past and should endeavour to hand down to posterity traditions worthy of their ancestors.

The Congress claims to have a clean record of service and achievements during the last eighteen years of its existence. It has a clear cut policy and a programme of work with a view to salvaging this country and its people from bondage. No lover of liberty or one inspired by zeal and enthusiasm to work for the liberation of the motherland should hesitate or pause to join the Congress and contribute his or her share towards the achievement of this desired end.

When I vacate the chair at the end of the coming year, I hope, with your goodwill and corporation [*sic*], I shall be able to achieve, nay, advance a step forward in the path of progress. May I be able to say that I have endeavoured to do my duty by the Congress and the Country.

I thank you most sincerely, fellow delegates and friends, for the patient hearing you accorded to me.

Resolution

Mr. Roland E. W. Perera proposed that:

The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that Ceylon should be granted full responsible government and requests the Board of Ministers and the State Council

to take immediate steps to attain that object before the next general election.

Mr. Perera said that it was encouraging to find a representative of the European Association in the person of Mr. Pye in their midst. He hoped that, as in the times of George Wall, the European community would lead the country in its fight for political emancipation. Mr. E. Y. D. Abeygunawardena seconded. The resolution was put to the house and carried.

Cost of Education

Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa proposed that:

The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that legislation should be introduced to make it obligatory for all local bodies to contribute towards the cost of primary education in their respective areas.

Mr. W. F. B. Perera seconded. The motion was supported by Messrs. K. Dahanayake and L. M. Gooneratne. At this stage the proceedings were adjourned for lunch.

200 At Lunch

About 200 sat for the lunch which was held in the College dining hall. Mr. Amarasuriya presided, and among others present was Mr. Pye, the Secretary of the European Association. Mr. R. Kuruwita Gunasekere thanked Mr. Wijemanne and Mr. Amarasuriya for the services they were rendering to the country. He next referred to Mr. Pye's presence and expressed the hope that the European community would give their support to the peopl of this country in their efforts to obtain full responsib government.

Mr. Pye's Remarks

Mr. Pye in thanking the last speaker for the refere made to him and his association expressed the regret of association at the unavoidable absence of Mr. C. G Kerr at the meeting. Referring to the suggestion to b

round table conference, Mr. Pye thought it would be supported by the members of the European community. They would then be able, he said, to press their viewpoint and arrive at a settlement for the political welfare of this Island.

Mr. Wijemanne briefly thanked the delegates.

Paddy Cultivation

When the Congress resumed its sitting at 2 o'clock, Mr. Clement Dias moved that:

> The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that Government should devote more attention to research in paddy with a view to its extensive cultivation both in the wet and dry zones of the Island.

He said that while the government had instituted research schemes for tea, rubber and coconut, nothing had been done in that direction so far as paddy was concerned. Mr. Lord of the Agricultural Department was sometime ago sent out to Java to study the latest methods of paddy cultivation and while he was there he was requested by the government to study the latest methods of rubber cultivation too. The result of Mr. Lord's research work in paddy had not been made available to the village cultivator through the medium of Sinhalese literature. He advocated the creation by government of an advisory board which should perform functions similar to those now undertaken by the research schemes. Continuing, he said that it was time that the Europeans too took to paddy cultivation.

Mr. I. B. Dissanayake seconded the motion. Mr. D. T. A. Gunawardene and Mrs. Wijetha Jayawardena supported the resolution which was passed unanimously.

The discussion was then resumed on the motion suggesting the introduction of legislation to make it obligatory for all local bodies to contribute towards the cost of primary education in their respective areas.

Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara, the Minister of Education, said that an amendment had been made to the Education Code which would meet the requirements of the Congress as embodied in that resolution.

The resolution was passed unanimously.

Other resolutions passed were as follows

The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that a Commission should be appointed to examine and report on the incidence of taxation with a view to relieving the poor of the heavy burden of taxation.

Moved by Mr. Siripala Jayatilleke and seconded by Mr. D. A. Jayasinghe.

Excise Policy

The Ceylon National Congress requests Government to appoint a Commission to examine and report on the present excise policy.

Moved by Mr. M. R. Perera and seconded by Mr. L. S. Fernando.

Sir Baron Jayatilaka, speaking on this resolution, said that the President in his speech had said that Excise Department was not acting according to the accepte policy.

But Mr. Amarasuriya had not mentioned what th policy was. The only policy that he knew was that of lo option and when any locality expressed the desire of residents either for or against the existence of taverns decision was given effect to by the Excise Department.

As regards tapping for sweet toddy, Sir Baron said at present the number of trees permitted to be tapp one man by the existing regulations was five trees. wanted that to be increased those resolutions woul to be amended.

If the people were allowed to tap indiscriminately for sweet toddy, he thought that illicit sale of toddy would increase and the resultant poverty of the people would be greater.

He assured them that the officers of the Excise Department were carrying out the policy of his Ministry.

Continuing, he said that some thought that as total prohibition was being tried in some parts of India, Ceylon also should follow that example. They had to see whether that would be successful. They knew his decided views regarding temperance and he would not encourage the increase of drunkenness, poverty, and crime in this country.

The motion was accepted, and the session concluded.

C. Appendix to the Nineteenth Annual Sessions

(1) Ceylon Daily News Editorial, 20 December 1937: "Congress"

The Ceylon National Congress was once an important and responsible political organisation which had the active assistance and support of the accredited national leaders of the country. Its annual session was an event of some consequence for great names were associated with this organisation which bore the brunt of the pioneering work for political reforms. In those days it might legitimately have been said that the National Congress represented the point of view of enlightened public opinion. Like most political parties which fail for lack of organisation, the Ceylon National Congress fell upon evil days but the present President who was re-elected for the third time claimed at the annual session on Saturday last that he saved the Congress from extinction two years ago and that it is now in a robust condition. Whatever may be the views of the President on the present position of the Congress, there is no evidence in the country to justify his cheerful optimism. It is very unlikely indeed that the Congress will

ever get back to the position when it was the spearhead of the country's campaign for freedom and reform. It has lost in personnel, for many who benefited by being associated with it and became successful in the political sphere through this association are no longer among its active supporters. The Indian National Congress on which the local organisation was modelled has a great advantage in that it receives substantial financial assistance from its supporters. As the Ceylon National Congress has never had available to it funds for its work and propaganda, its activities have necessarily been restricted to the passing of pious resolutions which it could do nothing to implement. There has also been unfortunately a lack of constructive unselfish effort on the part of its supporters who have been keener on their own careers than the success of the Congress policy. In spite of its undoubted shortcomings there still remains much work that an organisation like the Congress can easily do, if only its supporters will decide to devote themselves unselfishly and willingly to its service. The political education of the masses is an activity which can be easily undertaken. It will serve as a useful check on the propaganda of self-interested political organisations which are brought into operation for the purpose of elections. At a time when local bodies such as village committees are being vested with more power and responsibility the education of the masses will ensure that these new responsibilities will be in safe hands. It will al enable the masses to appreciate more intelligently the val of the political rights now enjoyed under the exist suffrage. It is work of this kind that the Congress sho concentrate upon for there are now new forces in country, including the State Council itself, which are be able to undertake some of the tasks which the Congress to perform at one time. The Congress would do we realise that under the existing conditions the real str of any political organisation greatly depends upo impression it is able to create for its unselfish work masses.

(2) Newspaper Report on the Second Annual Conference of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, 18 December 1937[1]

Sama Samaj Resolutions

A large number of resolutions were passed at the second annual conference of the Lanka Sama Samaj Party which was held at Kolonnawa Vidyalaya on Saturday. Among the delegates and visitors were several Buddhist monks, Mr. D. M. Rajapakse and Mr. and Mrs. K. Natesa Iyer. The proceedings began with the singing of Socialist songs. Dr. Colvin R. de Silva, the President, then delivered his address. The annual report was read by Mr. Vernon Gunasekera, one of the Joint Secretaries.

The following were among the resolutions carried:—

Proposed by Mr. N. M. Perera and seconded by Mr. S. Kulatilleke:

> The Lanka Sama Samaja Party pledges itself to continue to wage unceasingly the struggle it has launched for the total abolition of the Headmen System which is in the hands of feudal families.

Proposed by Mr. Edmund Samarakkody and seconded by Mr. Vernon Gunasekera:

(1) The Lanka Sama Samaja Party reiterates its demand for the repeal of those sections of the Trade Union Ordinance relating to compulsory registration which hampered the growth of working class organisations.

(2) The Lanka Sama Samaja Party reiterates the solidarity of the masses of Ceylon with the long and heroic struggle of the workers and peasants of Spain against Fascist aggression.

(3) The Lanka Sama Samaja Party pledges the solidarity of the masses of Ceylon with the Chinese people in their united resistance against aggression.

1. *CDN*, 20 December 1937.

4) The Lanka Sama Samaja Party reiterates its demand for the immediate introduction of the eight-hour day for all workers and insists that it should be accompanied by a universal minimum wage ordinance in order to prevent the employers from utilising the shortening of the working day as a weapon for the reduction of wages.

5) The Lanka Sama Samaja Party condemns class discrimination in the present land colonization policy and demands: (a) The immediate discontinuance of the so-called "middle class" colonization schemes which confer special privileges to the propertied classes at the expense of the starving peasantry. (b) The granting free of rent to peasants of as much land as they undertake themselves to cultivate instead of the present uneconomic fragments.

6) In view of the extreme hardship under which the peasantry of our land is struggling for existence, the Lanka Sama Samaja Party demands as immediate ameliorative measures—

(a) Allotment of free pasture land in every rural district.

(b) Grant of seed paddy free of interest to peasant cultivators.

(c) The abolition of all irrigation rates.

(d) The amendment of the cattle trespass ordinance so as to prevent the arbitrary seizure and the wanton shooting of village cattle.

(e) The unrestricted right to tap coconut, palmyrah and kitul trees for sweet toddy.

(f) Repeal of all restrictions on chena cultivations.

7) The Lanka Sama Samaja Party condemns the action of the Board of Ministers in permitting fresh t-
ment of labour from abroad at a time une
is widespread both among Ceylone

(2) Newspap
the L

Lanka S
ministers for
education while
denied free elementar
S. P. condemns the atte
vernacular teachers' sala
"grading" and refusal of reg

New Office-Bearers

The following office-bearers were elect
year :—

President : Dr. Colvin R. de Silva

Hony. Treasurer : Dr. N. M. Perera

Hony. Joint Secretaries : Messrs. Roy de Mel
T. Kotalawala.

A large committee was also elected.

The proceedings ended with the singing of the Pa
anthem.

32. TWENTIETH ANNUAL SESSIONS. 17 DECEMBER 1938

A. AGENDA[1]

Town Hall, Panadura

8 a.m.	Delegates assemble at Sirimedura, the residence of Mr. Susanta de Fonseka of Panadura.
8 30 a.m	Procession to the Town Hall starts.
9 a.m.	Sessions begin. Welcome Song.
9 a.m. to 9.30 a.m.	Address by the Chairman of the Reception Committee.
9.30 a.m. to 10.30 a.m.	President's Address.
10.30 a.m. to 10 50 a.m.	Report of the delegation to England.
10.50 a.m. to 1 p.m.	Resolutions:

1. That the Ceylon National Congress demands full responsible government for Ceylon, and urges the immediate reform of the Constitution in the following respects:

(1) Removal of the Officers of State. (2) Abolition of the Executive Committee system of Government. (3) Adoption of the British Parliamentary system in the selection of Ministers with full Cabinet responsibility. (4) The appointment of an independent Public Services Commission. (5) The increase of the elected territorial seats from 50 to 60.

1. C.N.A., 00/23.

Proposer: Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne. Seconder: Mr. George de Silva. R. S. S. Gunewardene will speak in support.[1]

2. That in establishing colonies, Government should (*a*) provide irrigation and road facilities, (*b*) clear and prepare the land for cultivation, (*c*) build suitable houses for occupation, (*d*) supply the necessary cattle, planting material and agricultural implements, (*e*) provide medical facilities and (*f*) give monetary assistance for the first six months.

Proposer: Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa. Seconder Mr. C. D. A. Gunawardene.

3. That the Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that protection should be afforded to producers of food-stuffs, by the fixing of prices, the imposing of quotas and the regulation of tariffs.

Proposer: Mr. A. Clement Dias. Seconder: W. D. A. Soysa[2]

1 p.m.	Lunch.
2 p.m.	Congress reassembles.
2 p.m. to 2.30 p.m.	(*a*) Annual Report of the Secretaries.

1. This sentence has been inserted in ink and was not part of the printed leaflet.

2. As corrected in ink. The printed version reveals that D. R. Jayawardene was billed as proposer and A. Clement Dias as seconder.

(b) Statement of Accounts.

(c) Election of the Executive Committee.

.30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Resolutions.

4. That in the opinion of this Congress more vigorous measures should be taken for the extension and strengthening of local self-government.

Proposer: Mr. W. R. Wijemanne. Seconder: Mr. T E. Gunaratna.

5. That the Ceylon National Congress demands that further steps should be taken to curtail immigration.

Proposer: Mr. P. D. S. Jayasekera.

Seconder: Mr. Samson Siriwardena. M. H. A. Banda.[1]

6. That this Congress demands that a Commission be appointed to report on the excise policy of the Government, and to make recommendations for the revision of such policy.

Proposer: Mr. L. S. Fernando.[2]

Seconder: Mr. L. M. Gooneratne.

to 6.30 p.m. "At Home" by the Chairman of the Reception Committee, national dances, etc.

1. Banda's name has been inserted in ink.

2. As pencilled in. The printed leaflet named the proposer as "The President of the Wadduwa Mahajana Sabha."

B. Minutes of the Sessions

Summary of the proceedings of the nineteenth [*sic*] annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held at the Town Hall, Panadura, on the 17th of December 1938.

The delegates assembled at Sirimedura, the residence of Mr. Susanta de Fonseka, Chairman of the Reception Committee. From there the delegates and the President were conducted to the Town Hall in a grand perahera organised by the Panadura Mahajana Sabha.

The sessions began at the Town Hall with a welcome song by school children. The Chairman of the Reception Committee then addressed the gathering.

The President, Sir D. B. Jayatilaka, next occupied the chair and delivered his presidential address. After the President's address, Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya, the leader of the Congress delegation to England read a report of the work of the delegation in England.

The first resolution was moved by Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne and seconded by Mr. George E. de Silva. The resolution read as follows:

> That the Ceylon National Congress demands full responsible government for Ceylon and urges the immediate reform of the Constitution in the following respects:
>
> (1) Removal of the Officers of State.
>
> (2) Abolition of the Executive Committee system of government.
>
> (3) Adoption of the British Parliamentary system in the selection of Ministers with full cabinet responsibility.
>
> (4) The appointment of an independent Public Services Commission.
>
> (5) The increase of the elected territorial seats from 50 to 60.

Mr. Stanley de Zoysa moved the following amendment

The Ceylon National Congress reiterates its faith Ceylon's immediate right to full responsible gover ment and resolves to prepare a programme of action secure the immediate reform of the Constitution in t following respects:

(1) Removal of the Officers of State.

(2) Abolition of the Executive Committees system government.

(3) Adoption of the British Parliamentary system the selection of Ministers with full cabinet r ponsibility.

(4) The appointment of an independent Public Servic Commission.

(5) The increase of the elected territorial seats fr 50 to 60.

(6) The curtailment of the Governor's powers.

(7) The retention of adult suffrage for the permane population of the country.

J. R. Mr. Wi

B. MINUTES OF THE SESSIONS

Summary of the proceedings of the nineteenth [*sic*] annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held at the Town Hall, Panadura, on the 17th of December 1938.

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(5) The increase of the elected territorial seats from 50 to 60.

Mr. Stanley de Zoysa moved the following amendments:

The Ceylon National Congress reiterates its faith in Ceylon's immediate right to full responsible government and resolves to prepare a programme of action to secure the immediate reform of the Constitution in the following respects:

(1) Removal of the Officers of State.

(2) Abolition of the Executive Committees system of government.

(3) Adoption of the British Parliamentary system in the selection of Ministers with full cabinet responsibility.

(4) The appointment of an independent Public Services Commission.

(5) The increase of the elected territorial seats from 50 to 60.

(6) The curtailment of the Governor's powers.

(7) The retention of adult suffrage for the permanent population of the country.

This was seconded by Mr. J. R. Jayewardene. Mr. Wijeratne, the mover of the motion, accepted the amendment and it was unanimously passed by the House.

The second resolution was as follows:—

That in establishing colonies Government should (*a*) provide irrigation and road facilities (*b*) clear and prepare the land for cultivation (*c*) build suitable houses for occupation (*d*) supply the necessary cattle, planting material and agricultural implements (*e*) provide medical facilities and (*f*) give monetary assistance for the first six months.

This was proposed by Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa and seconded by Mr. C. D. A. Gunawardene. After discussion, the resolution was unanimously adopted.

The third resolution, which was as follows:

> That the Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that protection should be afforded to producers of food-stuffs by the fixing of prices, the imposing of quotas, and the regulation of tariffs,

was proposed by Mr. A. Clement Dias and seconded by Mr. W. D. A. Soysa. This resolution was also unanimously adopted.

At this stage, the delegates adjourned for lunch as the guests of the Panadura Maha Jana Sabha. On sessions re-commencing after lunch, the Secretary read out letters from the following expressing inability to attend, viz: Messrs. C. G. C. Kerr, K. C. W. Perera, Wilfred Gunesekera, C. S. Dissanayake, N. J. V. Cooray, Louis Jacolyn and Major J. W. Oldfield.

Two letters from Messrs. C. W. W. Kannangara and S. W. R. Dias Bandaranaike were reserved for consideration at a meeting of the Executive Committee.

A letter signed by Messrs. A. W. H. Abeyesundere, J. R. Jayewardene, F. C. de Saram, C. C. Rasaratnam and C. P. G. Abeyewardena was also handed up asking the question whether Congress was going to function as a political party and to nominate candidates for election to the State Council, and demanding a public declaration to that effect. The question was also asked whether action will be taken against members and affiliated bodies which work contrary to Congress. The President replied that these matters had already been provided for in the rules, but that a final decision on the matter would have to left to the Executive Committee.

The Annual Report of the Secretaries and the Annual Balance Sheet were read and adopted. The election of the Executive Committee produced the following results: [the list is presented on pp. 46-47].

The fourth resolution which read as follows was then taken up, viz:

> That in the opinion of this Congress more vigorous measures should be taken for the extension and strengthening of local self-government.

Proposed by Mr. W. R. Wijemanne and seconded by Mr T. E. Gunaratna. This was unanimously passed.

The next resolution on the agenda was:

> That the Ceylon National Congress demands that further steps should be taken to curtail immigration.

Proposed by Mr. P. D. S. Jayasekera and seconded by Mr Samson Siriwardena. Passed unanimously.

The last resolution which read as follows was also unanimously adopted, viz:

> That this Congress demands that a Commission be appointed to report on the Excise Policy of the Government, and to make recommendations for the revision of such policy.

This was proposed by Mr. L. S. Fernando and seconded by Mr. L. M. Gooneratne.

A vote of thanks to the chair terminated the proceedings of the session.

The Chairman of the Reception Committee was "At House" to the delegates after the sessions.

Victor C. Perera,
Hony. Joint Secretaries.

C. Draft Report on the Sessions

"We are yet far from the goal of self-government, and the bureaucracy, strengthened by forces of reaction, both here and England, can still successfully defy the will of the people" declared Sir Baron Jayatilaka, in his presidential address at the annual sessions of the National Congress held at Panadura Town Hall on Saturday. After reviewing the political events of the last fifteen years he referred "to the failure of officialdom to act in the spirit of the Donoughmore commissioners recommendations" and also to the inherent defects of the constitution, which he called the "halfway house of constitutional reforms." I must appeal to members of minority communities engaged at present in political welfare [*sic*] he said "to try and put an end to the unscrupulous campaign of misrepresentation carried on [*sic*] their behalf."

The Congress passed a number of resolutions among which was one "reiterating Ceylon's immediate right to full responsible government."

Campaign of Misrepresentation

Delegates from various parts of the island assembled at "Sirimedura" the residence of Mr. Susanta de Fonseka, Chairman of the Reception Committee, in the morning and with Sir Baron as the central figure seated in a decorated car with Mr. de Fonseka, a procession formed itself for the town hall. The procession was led by elephants, one of which was ridden by Mr. D. S. Senanayake, Minister of Agriculture and Lands, and Mr. J. L. Kotalawala, Minister of Communications and Works. Other Ministers who

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1. C. N. A. 60/99; except for the presidentia address, a handwritten report. The same version appeared in the *CDN*, 19 December 1938. The headlines provided in the draft read:

Ceylon Still Far from Self-Government
Sir D. B. Jayatilaka on Forces of Reaction
National Congress Annual Sessions

The *CDN* had an additional caption "Appeal to Minorities." One should note that the report of the *Ceylon Observer* (17 December, 1938) had the following headlines: "Sir Baron On Unscrupulous Campaign of Communalists;" "Cloud of Mystery Over Reforms Despatches;" "Appeal to Indians and Europeans;" and "Enthusiastic Scenes at Congress Sessions."

participated in the celebrations were Mr. G. C. S. Corea, Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce, and Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara, Minister of Education.

Hundreds of school children, with their teachers, bearing the Sinhalese national flag and little banners with inscriptions calling upon all communities to unite, also took part in the procession. There were also parties of national folk dancers and musicians. Thousands of men, women and children thronged the Town Hall grounds.

On entering the hall Sir Baron said that he was overwhelmed by the warmth and the spontaneity of the welcome that had been accorded him. At the end of the day's proceedings he said to Mr. Fonseka: "There is no doubt we have given new life to the Congress."

The annual sessions opened with the address of Mr. Susanta de Fonseka as Chairman of the Reception Committee.

S. De Fonseka's Address

Mr. de Fonseka, after welcoming the delegates, said that reforms were coming and the new year would acquaint them with their scope and extent. It was certain that the Committee system of government would be replaced by a Cabinet system and for complete success of this a party system was needed. It was therefore necessary for the Congress to change its outlook and methods. He urged them, for this purpose, to make a determined effort to capture the masses.

"Appeals from parties primarily based on racial or class considerations might temporarily lead them astray, but principles of evolution rather than revolution, tolerance for other races and faiths, respect for other opinion, social justice and social equality, a demand for a fairer, better and truer distribution of all the good things that go to make up

1. Written in the same hand as that responsible for the report. The sub-heading preceding his speech reads "New Outlook Needed."

a good and happy life and work for every one, and equa opportunities for all, all those principles for which Congres stood for and fought for in the past, will gradually veer th masses round to the Congress banner, if those principle are courageously adhered to and determinedly worke for," continued Mr. de Fonseka.

"Above all take the Congress into the villages. Not only its principles but also its organisations." After referring to the changes Ceylon has undergone during the last eigh years, he said that there were thousands of young men today highly educated and highly intelligent, who were dissatisfied with existing conditions, and who were clamouring for a new order of things.

Mr. de Fonseka in conclusion paid a tribute to Mr. Amarasuriya, the former President, and to the new President, Sir Baron Jayatilaka. "In a long life, distinguished and honourable and dedicated to the public weal," said Mr. de Fonseka, "and at a time when he could have justifiably showed [sic] a well-earned rest, Sir Baron has again answered the call of the Congress to lead it in the difficult years ahead."

"Sinhalese, Muslims, Indians and Tamils vied with one another to pay homage to a man whose whole life has been characterised by the highest principles of honour, of courage, of faithfulness and of truth which is greater than all, and the lustre of whose public work and public service was not even for a moment dimmed by a passing cloud."

Sir Baron Jayatilaka's Presidential Address[1]

This is the second time the Congress has conferred upon me the honour of being its President. The first time I was chosen for this office was in 1923. On that occasion I devoted a considerable part of my address to a fairly full account of the progress of political development in Ceylon during the British period. It may not be out of place, and in fact it

1. Available as a pamphlet (see C.N.A. 60/99) with Sinhalese and English versions and prefaced by a photograph of Sir D. B. Jayatilaka, the printers being Lankabhinawa Vissruta Press, No. 23, 25 Kanatta Road, Borella, Colombo.

may be, I think, distinctly useful in understanding the present position, if I bring that historical sketch up to date by recording briefly the important events of the past 15 years which relate to constitutional development in this country.

In 1923 the Congress met on the eve of the publication of the Order-in-Council which inaugurated the Reformed Legislative Council of 1924. This measure of reform marked a distinct advance in several respects. It established a clear unofficial majority in the Council and made territorial representation the main basis of election. The Governor ceased to preside over the meetings of the Council, his place being taken by a Vice-President chosen from among the elected members. Important as these changes were, it was not long before the defects of the new Constitution began to manifest themselves. The gravest of these defects was that it conferred on the members power without responsibility. The executive functions of the Government were retained entirely in the hands of the officials. The representatives of the people were given the power to criticise and oppose the proposals of the Government. This unlimited power of criticism, divorced from responsibility, often created serious difficulties for the Government. It is indeed a marvel that this Constitution lasted for seven long years without causing irreparable harm to the country. It was clear that this scheme of Government could not be allowed to continue indefinitely. Neither the Government nor the people were satisfied with it. So in 1927, acting, it is believed, on a strong representation made by Sir Hugh Clifford, who was then Governor, the Secretary of State decided to send out a royal commission under the chairmanship of the Earl of Donoughmore to investigate the whole question of constitutional reform on the spot and recommend a form of Government suitable to the country. The Commission, after an exhaustive inquiry, recommended a new Constitution, which finds no parallel as a system of national government in any part of the world The scheme, however, contained several features which marked a distinct advance upon previous reform measures.

The abolition of communal representation, adult suffrage, transference of executive power (with certain limitations) to the representatives of the people were some of the Commissioners' proposals which commended themselves strongly to the progressive section of the people. On the other hand, the proposal to appoint three officials, not responsible to the Legislature, as Ministers of State in charge of large and important departments, the reservation of special powers, unlimited and undefined, to the Governor, and the establishment of the Public Services Commission composed of the three Officers of State excited great opposition in the country. It was, however, the Executive Committee system, which formed the pivot of the Constitution, recommended by the Commission, that formed the main subject of controversy. In 1929 the Legislative Council by a very narrow majority decided in favour of the scheme of government proposed by the Donoughmore Commission. But when the Order-in-Council embodying the proposals of the Commission was promulgated, it was found that the framers of the law had transformed both in the spirit and in the letter some of the recommendations, thereby strengthening the position of the official element in the Council and reducing the responsibility of the elected Ministers.

During the seven years the new Constitution has been in operation, in more than one instance new interpretations have been placed upon the clauses of the Order-in-Council in order to enlarge the powers reserved to the Governor and to enable the enactment of laws without the advice and consent of the State Council. Moreover, the Officers of State, who as one stage formed themselves into an inner cabinet, have never ceased to claim for themselves a greater measure of power than was ever contemplated by the Donoughmore Commission. These attempts of the bureaucracy to entrench itself strongly within the Constitution and create a dyarchical form of government have often led to friction and bitterness of feeling.

Apart from the failure on the part of officialdom to act in the spirit of the Donoughmore Commission's recommendations, the inherent defects of the Constitution themselves

militated against its functioning successfully. As often pointed out, the Donoughmore scheme of government diffuses responsibility. Neither the Ministers who are merely elected Chairmen of their respective Executive Committees, nor the Committees themselves, can be held accountable for any failure or mistake The Committees functioned in watertight compartments, independent of each other, and there is no co-ordination of the various activities of the government. Moreover, there is no central authority empowered to initiate policy on a comprehensive survey of the needs of the people with a due regard to the financial resources of the country

Within a short time after the introduction of the new Constitution, it became clear that this half-way house of constitutional reform was not going to be great success. In 1933 the Board of Ministers submitted to the Governor two memoranda mainly based upon certain resolutions passed by the State Council setting forth the defects of the Constitution and suggesting amendments to it in certain respects. Unfortunately on that occasion the Ministers were not unanimous. Three of them submitted dissents which enabled the Governor, Sir Edward Stubbs, to shelve the question of reforms altogether on the ground that he could take no action on the representations of the Ministers as they were not themselves agreed as to the nature and extent of the reforms they desired. This attitude of the Governor was naturally a great disappointment to those who were agitating for a liberal measure of responsible Government. When, therefore, the general elections were held in 1936, it was decided by the Congress Party to make an effort to secure the election of such Ministers as would agree to act together in the matter of constitutional reform. With the co-operation of others, belonging to minority communities, it was possible to make this attempt a success. In the result seven Congress men were elected as Ministers. There was nothing secret, under-hand or unconstitutional in t[illegible] proceedings. What was done on that occasion more than what any party strong enough could attempt. Yet this action on the part of the C[illegible]

in Council is often represented—or rather misrepresented—as a sinister move on the part of the Sinhalese to dominate the minorities and harm their interests. More than two years have passed since the Congress Ministry was formed. Can any one honestly quote a single instance in which the present Ministers have, either individually or collectively, been responsible for any act calculated to injure the interests of any section of the community ?

Early this year the Ministers submitted to the Governor a memorandum formulating a scheme of responsible government. His Excellency discussed the whole question with the Ministers on two occasions before he forwarded his report to the Secretary of State.

In the meanwhile the Congress had taken certain steps, detailed in the Annual Report, for the furtherance of reforms, the most important of which was sending a delegation consisting of Messrs. H. W. Amarasuriya, E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, and George E. de Silva to place our case for reform before the Secretary of State. A full report of the work done in England by the deputation will be submitted presently by the leader, Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya. I do not, therefore, propose to describe their activities here. But I cannot refrain from expressing publicly my sincere appreciation of the valuable services rendered by the members of the delegation, especially by Mr. Amarasuriya, to whose unselfish devotion to the cause and his munificence the Congress owes so much.

According to certain official pronouncements the Governor's despatch on reforms and the Secretary of State's reply are about to be published. A cloud of mystery seems to hang over this matter. Nobody seems to know whether the despatches have been received, and if they have really come, why they are not published. A suggestion was recently made by the President of the European Association that the publication of the despatches might be delayed until certain pending questions were settled. What connection there is beween these pending questions and the reform proposals, it is difficult to see. It is also an open

secret that some communal members of the State Council sent the other day a S. O. S. message to London urging among other things the non-publication of the despatches. Then there is the unscrupulous campaign of gross misrepresentation which is now being carried on in England by the representatives of local communalists. Whether these sinister influences are delaying or hindering the publication of these despatches, no one can say. For my part I hesitate to believe such a thing is possible in view of the official pronouncements, both here and in London. However that may be, Congress must be prepared to deal promptly with this question, if and when the despatches are allowed to see the light of day. Most probably a special session of the Congress may have to be convened to consider them and take such steps as may be necessary to represent its views adequately to the "powers that be."

At this point I want to say a few words on the task that lies before us. If there has been any advancement politically in this country during the past fifteen or twenty years, everybody must admit that it has been due to the efforts of the Congress and Congress alone. It is equally certain that no other organization exists to-day which is capable of continuing the fight for the political emancipation of Ceylon to a successful issue. A great responsibility, therefore, rests upon all of us who belong to the Congress Party to do everything in our power to review its pristine vigour and make it once more strong, efficient and representative so that it may speak and act for the progressive elements of the country. To achieve this end a certain amount of reconstruction, or rather internal re-organization, seems necessary. This is a matter which the new Executive Committee will be called upon to consider without delay. What I desire to emphasise on this occasion is the great necessity there is for regular, intensive work in the country in order to awaken the people to the realities of the situation that confronts us to-day. The bulk of our people have been lulled into a false sense of security and they believe that all is well with us, that everything is moving smoothly towards the desired end. But recent events have amply

proved that this is a mistaken view. In fact we are yet far from the goal of self-government, and bureaucracy, strengthened by the forces of reaction both here and in England, can still successfully defy the will of the people. There is thus an enormous amount of field work to be done in educating the people to realise the actual situation and in organizing them so that they may take an intelligent and effective part in the fight for their political freedom. In this connection one fact must be borne in mind. It is no good going to the country without a definite programme. It is true that the principles on which the policy of the Congress is based have been clearly laid down. But the Congress has not at any time formulated and put into practice a programme of work in order to carry out that policy. The Congress has, therefore, to a large extent failed to make the best use of its opportunities. It is for us to see that mistake is not repeated. Public support and sympathy will, I am sure, come to us in no small measure when we show, not by mere words but by action, that we have a definite programme of work not only in the political plane but also in the sphere of social and economic welfare of the country. To the latter aspect of our duty I shall have to refer again.

In dealing with the question of constitutional reform on an occasion like the present, it is impossible to ignore the attitude of certain minority sections of the population. It is clear that they do not want the extension of political rights to Ceylon, ostensibly on the ground that any such extension may increase the power of the majority community. We need not speculate upon the real reason for this opposition. It is enough if we recognise that it does exist. It then becomes our duty to see what we can, in reason and without surrendering our principles, do to remove that unfriendly attitude. It is of utmost importance that the Sinhalese should refrain from imitating the communal activities of the minority communities. There is no ground for the Sinhalese majority to think that special efforts must be made to protect their interests apart from the other sections of the permanent population. Having

said that, I must appeal to members of minority communities engaged at present in political warfare to try and put an end to the unscrupulous campaign of misrepresentations, carried on on their behalf, to which I have already referred above. It can do them no good in the long run, for the truth will be found out sooner or later, while this campaign is bound to embitter feelings. People of this country, to whatever race or creed they belong, have lived in peace and harmony for centuries. It will be most unfortunate if mere political differences, based for the most part on sentiment, succeed in creating a permanent barrier between the majority community and the other sections of the people, thereby preventing national unity and co-operation for the common good of all.

May I add one word of special appeal to the Indian and British people resident in Ceylon? They—especially the latter—can undoubtedly do much to help the political progress of this country. But have they ever been helpful in this respect? I am afraid the answer must be in the negative. It is a strange, and to my mind, a pathetic fact that most of the prominent Indian politicians in our midst, who, in their own land, were most probably ardent nationalists, have joined the ranks of diehard communalism and are doing their utmost to prevent the people of Ceylon from securing a decent measure of self-government. As regards the British residents, it is an indisputable fact that they have all along opposed the extension of political rights enjoyed by the Ceylonese, and have been ever ready to take under their wing every communal clique that manifested reactionary and disruptive tendencies. Are they, I ask, going to persist in this attitude for ever? More than a year ago the President of the European Association declared that he and his friends would get down from the fence in due course and enter the arena of politics in full force. Whether they have already stopped down, and if they have, on which side of the fence, I do not know. But if there is yet a chance, may I ask them to get down this time on the right side of the fence—not to the communal backyard, but to the path in front which leads to the goal

of political freedom for Ceylon. In all seriousness I would suggest to the politically-minded Indians and Englishmen in our midst the desirability of reconsidering their attitude towards the question of constitutional reform. The policy they are now pursuing is not calculated, I fear, to promote friendly relations between the major community and the other sections of the permanent population. Growth of political discord cannot possibly be an advantage to them in the long run, while it may do infinite harm to the people of this country.

I must now turn for a few minutes to the consideration of the other aspect of our task to which I referred a while ago, namely, the promotion of the social and economic welfare of the country. However important our political activities may be, if we fail at the same time to improve the living conditions of our people, even the success of our labours in the sphere of constitutional reform may prove to be an empty blessing. The advantages of political advancement cannot be realised and made proper use of by a population, the major part of which is held in the grip of poverty and disease. In recent years the economic condition of the poorer classes has, as we know, worsened. The spectre of unemployment is stalking through the land causing acute suffering to the masses. The scourge of malaria is still the most prevalent disease in the island in spite of the efforts made by the Medical Department to check it. Nearly three million persons were treated for malaria in the hospitals and dispensaries during 1937, and deaths from that cause in hospitals alone totalled just over 1,450. As regards infants and maternal mortality, Ceylon still holds an unenviable position as compared with other civilized countries. Thirty-four thousand infants and 4,300 mothers have died last year. These facts and figures indicate the urgent necessity there is for a united effort to improve the conditions of life prevailing in the country. In this fight against poverty, disease and unemployment it is the duty of the Congress to take a leading part. It is my intention, therefore, to invite the Executive Committee at an early date to consider these pressing questions

and draw up a practical scheme of reconstruction work which may be put into operation in areas where no such activity exists at present.

The question of land—rather lack of land—in the healthier parts of the country is one of the most serious problems that confront us at the present time. The reckless policy pursued by the previous Government in alienating Crown land without any regard for the needs of a growing population is bearing fruit to-day, making it almost impossible to check increasing poverty and unemployment in rural areas.

Recently I toured through the greater part of Kegalla, Kandy and Matale Districts. At almost every place I visited I heard the same story that there is no land available for village purposes. On several occasions the villagers complained of the absence of cemeteries, which compelled them to bury their dead either in their tiny compounds or by the roadside. The seriousness of this land question becomes apparent when you examine it a little closely. To take a typical example, the Ratemahatmaya's Division of the Three Korales contains 323 square miles. Its population totals just over 120,000. Of these no less than 2,000 possess no land whatsoever. About a thousand more own less than an acre each. All the land available in this area of 300 square miles for village expansion and peasant settlements is little over 600 acres. According to a senior officer of the Forest Department, in the whole district of Kegalle there are only 7,000 acres of Crown forest, whereas in order to meet the needs of the present landless population at least 30,000 acres are required. In view of these facts, it was with some amazement that I read the recent speech of Sir Thomas Villiers in which he criticised the land policy of the Ministry of Agriculture. He does not seem to have realised what a cruel mockery it is to ask the villager to cultivate his land when he cannot claim an inch of ground as his own. It is clear that even Sir Thomas Villiers who has lived in this country for more than half a century has failed to view this serious problem from a correct angle of vision.

From what has been stated above, it will, I expect, be realised how important it is to ensure the success of the colonizing schemes of the Ministry of Agriculture so that landless villagers, now unable to secure employment or means of livelihood in populous districts may be induced to settle down on land available in less populated areas. The second resolution on the agenda, which relates to this question, deserves most careful consideration. It has been found by experience that it is not enough to place a man on a block of land in the jungle and give him a small sum of money to build a house for himself. It will tax his strength and resources to the utmost to clear the land and prepare it for cultivation. Many months must then elapse before the crops can be gathered, and the settler is able to get some return for his labour. All this while how is he to maintain himself and his family? It is mainly this difficulty that was responsible for the slow growth of the colonies and peasant settlements especially in the dry zone. In this connection, it must be remembered that the population of Ceylon is increasing by about 90,000 a year. This question of over-population in certain areas, already serious, will in the course of a few years become insoluble, unless early steps are taken to induce surplus thousands in populous districts to move into parts of the country where land is available. We must not also overlook the fact that ancient irrigation works now being repaired and put in order at a cost of many million rupees are making vast tracts of land once more fit for cultivation. All the money and labour spent on these works will be wasted, if these lands are not taken up whenever they become available. For these reasons, I would strongly commend this resolution to your acceptance.

The other resolutions which are on the agenda have each an importance of its own. I regret that the time at my disposal does not permit me to comment on them. There is, however, one motion—that relating to immigration—on which I feel I must say a word. This is a vexed problem which calls for careful handling. There can be no doubt that unrestricted immigration, especially of unskilled

our, contributes materially to unemployment. It has, refore, become imperatively necessary to restrict and ulate this flow of labour from outside. Already the listry of Labour, Industry and Commerce is taking the essary steps for this purpose. It may be that the proposed triction will not find much favour in India. But when Indian Government and the public men of India underad the real situation in this country, I venture to think t they will view with sympathy our efforts to solve serious problem of unemployment that faces us to-day.

t is a matter for sincere regret that of late there has been ch misunderstanding between India and Ceylon in ard to several matters. Some effort must be made, I ık, to remove these misunderstandings. It is hardly essary to refer here to the great debt we owe to India. need India to-day as much as we did in the past. India, , I venture to think, needs us. If this mutual need is ognised, there can be no difficulty in removing the little understandings that have recently arisen between the countries.

rother delegates and friends, I have done. It remains me to thank you once more for the honour you have e me and for giving me so patient a hearing.

n conclusion, may I ask you all, and the sons and ghters of Lanka through the land, to remember the rds of the great Indian poet, "mother and motherland worthier of regard than heaven itself." Let us take t noble saying as our motto and, sinking all differences, rk in unity for the common good of all, for the honour l glory of our motherland.

solutions

Self-Government Demand

Ir. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne next moved the first resolution the agenda which read:

That the Ceylon National Congress demands full re - ponsible Government for Ceylon, and urges the i

diate reform of the Constitution in the following respects:

(1) Removal of the Officers of State.

(2) Abolition of the Executive Committee system of government.

(3) Adoption of the British parliamentary system in the selection of Ministers with full cabinet responsibility.

(4) The appointment of an independent Public Services Commission.

(5) The increase of the elected territorial seats from 50 to 60.

Mr. Wijeyeratne confessed that a resolution of that kind was really not what was wanted at this juncture. What they should decide was how best to achieve the goal they had in view and work for it during the ensuing year. That motion might have awaited the publication of the anticipated reform despatches to see how far they met the demands the Congress had repeatedly made.

Speaking of the reforms, Mr. Wijeyeratne said that he was an optimist. He believed that at least six out of the seven demands they made would be granted. Manhood suffrage, he believed, would not be modified. He refuted the statement, attributed to him in an evening paper, that he had, while in England, said that there would be no serious objection to a certain restriction of the franchise. On the contrary, what he had emphasised was that if ever there was an attempt to tamper with the franchise granted to the people of Ceylon, martial law might have to be enforced at the next general election (applause). His impression was that in certain respects their demands would be more than conceded.

Mr. Wijeyeratne concluded by paying an eloquent tribute to Mr. Amarasuriya, who, he said, had spent over Rs. 15,000 on their mission to England, purely through his love for the country (applause).

Brain Power

Mr. Geo. E. de Silva, seconding the resolution, spoke of how he had told people in England that while Ireland and other countries shed blood to win their freedom, Ceylon would achieve it with "brain power" (applause). He appealed to all communities to join hands.

Mr. de Silva next referred to the self-sacrificing manner in which the late Mrs. Amarasuriya, while in England, encouraged her son, Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya to exert himself to the utmost in the activities of the delegation. Even though that lady was ill she asked her son not to trouble about her, but concentrate his attention on the achievement of the objects for which the delegation had gone That was an example worthy of emulation by other daughters of Lanka.

Mr. R. S. S. Gunewardene supported the resolution.

Mr. A. V. Dias, who said he wanted to move the following amendment, was ruled out of order, as due notice had not been given:

> That until self-sacrificing patriots are forthcoming to guide the destinies of this Island without prior consideration being attached to emoluments, as is done in India, the Members of State Council should not be increased in number.

Mr. Stanley de Zoysa moved to amend the resolution by substituting the words "reiterates its faith in Ceylon's immediate right to" for the word "demands" and "and resolves to prepare a program of action to secure" in place of the word "urges" in the resolution. He also moved to add at the end of the resolution: "(6) Curtailment of Governor's powers and (7) Retention of adult franchise for the permanent population of this Country."

The amendment, which was accepted both by the proposer and the seconder to the original resolution, was carried unanimously.

Land Policy

Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa next moved:

> That in establishing colonies Government should (*a*) provide irrigation and road facilities, (*b*) clear and prepare the land for cultivation, (*c*) build suitable houses for occupation, (*d*) supply the necessary cattle, planting material and agricultural implements, (*e*) provide medical facilities, and (*f*) give monetary assistance for the first six months.

Congress then adjourned for lunch.

Sir Baron, speaking after the interval, placed the Annual Report for adoption, and said that if Congress was to work vigorously in the future it was absolutely essential for it to form itself definitely into a party and work as a party.

The meeting signified its approval of this policy and the report was adopted.

The discussion on Mr. Jinendradasa's resolution was then resumed. Mr. C. D. A. Gunawardene seconded it. Mr. A. M. C. Dias opposed the resolution, not because he did not sympathise with it, but because it was putting the cart before the horse. Before opening up settlements for people from distant villages, they should first improve the conditions of the people in the villages themselves, he said.

Mr. D. G. Weerasinghe, a colonist from Minneriya, said that the economic salvation of the people could only be achieved by such large scale settlements like Minneriya and not by disposing of a few isolated acres here and there. Mr. R. R. H. de Mel supported.

Mr. D. S. Senanayake also supported the motion and said that no amount of reforms would help them without the necessary facilities to place the people on the land in such a way as to enable them to unkeep themselves and their families. He reminded them that the Ministry of Agriculture and Lands was not all powerful in doing what they considered necessary to be done. It could only do for the people what they were permitted to do. If they were to regain their economic salvation they must go in for more schemes like Minneriya.

The resolution was carried.

Other Resolutions

The rest of the meeting was occupied in [*sic*] the election of the Executive Committee and the discussion of the following resolutions, all of which were adopted: [here follow the resolutions Nos. 3, 4, 5 and 6 that have been reproduced earlier under the Agenda, item 32 : A, with the names of proposers and seconders as stated].

Mr. Susanta de Fonseka was " At Home " to the delegates from 5.00 to 6.00 p.m.

D. Appendices to the Twentieth Annual Sessions

(1) *Ceylon Daily News Editorial, 19 December 1938*: "The National Congress"

The fact that Sir Baron Jayatilaka has returned to the helm of the National Congress appears to have invested the session held at Panadura during the week-end with more than ordinary interest. This enthusiasm, however, can hardly be regarded as evidence that the Congress is about to enter upon a period when it will again exert a powerful influence on the public life of the country. Shorn of its Barnum touches, the demonstration, for such it was to a large extent, was nothing more than a popular tribute to Sir Baron. The Congress has done nothing to deserve public acceptance of its claims to be a national organisation ununceasingly labouring for the welfare of the people. But with the inauguration of a new system of government, it will have its uses to politicians with an eye on the main chance. We see the unedifying, but not altogether unexpected, spectacle of politicians who rejected the Congress, when it was no longer able to promote their ambitions, creeping back into the fold. Sir Baron Jayatilaka in his presidential speech did not qualify his words when he said that there was no room in the Congress for those who were committed to the exploitation of communal ideas. But we find those who entertain no scruples on this account being welcomed to the Congress platform without any inspection of their credentials. An agile politician without principles

a boneless wonder who can pick himself up and pursue his career under varying conditions, but a political organisation without principles builds on sand. If the Ceylon National Congress hopes to re-establish itself as an institution in whose integrity the people have trust, it has to be something more than a caucus to enable politicians to gain office and power by a short cut.

Sir Baron has called for a comprehensive policy on which the Congress can go to the country, and several resolutions were passed on Saturday in this connection. But who are the present Ministers ? They secured election to the Council on the Congress ticket and they are once again assembled on the same platform. They have been in office for three years ; some of them for a longer period. It is true that under the present Constitution they do not have an entirely free hand but they were not quite so helpless as they would like the world to believe. It is to say the least, rather absurd for the Congress to pass resolutions on excise policy and the land policy when its two most important members are directly responsible for these matters. It is useless to blame the Constitution for any deficiencies of policy for which Congressmen themselves must bear responsibility. But the Congress has never had a policy. Even if it had a policy, the Ministers who profited by their association with the Congress could not be relied upon to be loyal to such a policy.

What is now all too apparent is that the Congress is preparing for the constitutional changes with a new coat of paint and with a spring-cleaning of its old and ramshackle furniture. There are no signs of a reawakening, no evidence of a deep patriotism, no indication of a new spirit and a will to mobilise the best there is in the country for a constructive purpose. The Congress more than any other political organisation in the country was responsible for the constitutional and administrative muddles of the last seven years. Its leaders are today loud in their criticism of the Constitution. But eight years ago they saw in it the substance of responsible government. It was seven-tenths self-government with the small balance to be settled at an early

date. Those who criticised the wiseacres were driven out of public life. *Public memories are not so short as to conceal* the fact that Congressmen are today eating their own words. But seven years have gone in make-believe, and these years have left a legacy of confusion and demoralisation which *could have been avoided, if the counsels of* prudence were given a chance. The spirit of facile opportunism is still rampant. Once again the Congress is to be made a vessel for politicians to sail into power. If that indeed is the only object for which the Congress is to be refurbished, the next stage of decay will follow immediately after the ensuing elections.

(2) *Newspaper Report on the Third Annual Sessions of the Lanka Sama Samaja Party, 18 December 1938*[1]

Sama Samaja Point of View

"Baleful Figure of Mr. D S. Senanayake"

"The development of every major question that engaged the attention of our country during the last year has brought sharply to the surface the direct class issue and served to expose the true alignment of political forces," remarked Mr. Colvin R. de Silva, the President of the Sama Samaja Party, at the third annual sessions of the Party held yesterday at the Kolonnawa Vidyalaya.

The sessions lasted from 9 a.m. till late into the night and eighteen resolutions were discussed, besides proposals for the better organising of the party machinery and the opening of more branches in the outstations. The sessions opened with the reading of several messages of felicitation received from Socialist organisations in India.

Mr. de Silva prefaced his presidential address with reference to the international situation in Europe where "rated [sic] Imperialism has decided to buy off hungry and aggressive Fascism at the expense of the lesser states and the U.S.S.R."

1. *ODN*, 19 December 1938.

Class Consciousness

The rapid growth of the mass movement in Ceylon had induced in the bourgeoisie an overt class consciousness. Its instinctive fear of the masses was beginning to get a rationalised political basis that elevated it to the position of a conscious philosophy, he continued. Unable, in conditions of capitalist decline and intensified colonial exploitation, to make minor concessions with which to purchase the quiescence of the masses, the land owning bourgeoisie had turned to its natural allies to suppress its class enemy. These allies were the relics of out-worn Ceylonese feudalism and the local representatives of British Imperialism. It was noteworthy that the economic and political interests of these three sections were by no means identical, he remarked. On the one hand, it was only by smashing feudal power that British Imperialism had first consolidated its position in Ceylon: by the deliberate replacement of a degenerate aristocracy with an up-start brown officialdom. On the other hand, the basic economic and political interest of the Ceylonese bourgeoisie was the substitution in Ceylon of brown Capitalist exploitation for white.

Uneasy Bedfellows

It was that basic divergence of interests that made them uneasy bedfellows. But at one point their interest completely coincided. The upstart officialdom had developed aristocratic pretensions which the attack on the headmen system vitally endangered. The brown bourgeoisie dreaded an agrarian upheaval which threatened their position as big landowners and parasitic business men. Imperialism feared a mass movement for independence which alone could hope to overthrow its entrenched power.

Thus, for widely different reasons, they found that their interests coincided at one point and at that point stood the baleful figure of Mr. D. S. Senanayake.

The Minister of Agriculture

"The role of Mr. D. S. Senanayake in the contemporary political scene is deserving of careful characterisation and definition," continued Mr. de Silva. "Who is this man who embodies in himself the combination of three otherwise divergent tendencies? What is his policy, and whither does he seek to lead, or rather manoeuvre the peoples of this island? On the answers to these questions largely hinges the correct shaping of our political strategy and tactics in the year ahead. Mr. D. S Senanayake is the present head of a land-owning family of great wealth and many ramifications. Since the introduction of the Donoughmore Constitution, although only Minister of Agriculture, he has steadily gravitated to the centre of the political stage. Today, he is the acknowledged leader of the land-owning bourgeoisie of Ceylon. Sir Baron Jayatilaka may be the formal leader of the present ministerial puppet show; but the hand that holds the strings is that of Mr. Senanayake. Sir Baron remains not because he is leader, but because he provides that essential liberal facade behind which reactionary manoeuvres can most successfully be engineered."

Class Dominance

The politics of the Senanayake group, Mr. de Silva continued, was inherently simple. Its sole object was the preservation of its class dominance at any cost. The rising mass movement in the last three years had wrested a concession from the ruling classes. A still politically undifferentiated Council passed progressive measures, temporarily oblivious of a class interest. But the Bracegirdle issue had sharply posed the problem of anti-Imperialist struggle and the development of mass forces. In one year the country had rapidly educated politically and in the process the bourgeoisie had developed class conciousness to a high degree.

Reform Move

"In a dyarchical constitution such as ours," said Mr. de Silva referring to constitutional reform, "no reform can be characterised as progressive that does not entrench upon the Governor's powers. But the Senanayake reform move is not that. Though they formally attack the Governor's powers they actually seek only a readjustment of the Constitution, a setting right of the balance of power within the country itself and not as between ourselves and Imperialism. That is the significance of the attack on the Committee system. "The true gravamen of the charge is that the system makes the Council singularly responsive to public opinion and mass pressure. That does not suit either the bourgeoisie or the Imperialist book. So, the Committee system will go, and a cabinet system will be introduced that will to some extent neutralise the present influence of the universal franchise. The definitely class character of the move is obvious and apparent."

Immigration Issue

The immigration issue was even more revealing, he continued. The restriction of immigration at a time of wide-spread unemployment could surely be no matter for controversy; nevertheless they had the spectacle of their bourgeoisie rushing to protect the interests of 'planterdom' on a mere assurance regarding the employment of local labour unaccompanied by any collective guarantee for its observance. It was indeed remarkable how this group was tender and sentitive to every European interest. Every military or naval demand from the same quarters received ready support.

The Lanka Sama Samaja Party, he said, should be particularly warned "of that demagogic appeal to romantic racialism" which masqueraded as a political party under the name of the Sinhala Maha Sabha.

"Upstart Aristocracy"

"This body represents," he continued, "the alliance of the degenerate aristocracy of the uplands with the upstart aristocracy of the low. Flitting about inside it these [*sic*], indeed, are certain political indeterminates and social pretenders; but the fundamental basis of the Sinhala Maha Sabha is as I have stated.' "That body," he said, "made a veritable specialty of the technique of radical speeches masking reactionary politics. The Maha Sabha lions always roared a challenge to Imperialism while fitting its tail firmly between its legs in preparation for beating a retreat. The Maha Sabha lion looked an exaggerated mongrel. The nature of its appeal was obvious from the fact that it found its best response in the politically backward Kandyan Provinces and the more caste-ridden areas of the Low-country. In other circumstances it would have represented the local variant of brown Fascism, but as things were, it was doomed to defeat through lack of leadership, a steadily narrowing social base, and the natural operation of historic forces. In any event it embodied only another form of bourgeoisie reaction."

Strengthening The Party

Mr. D. M. Rajapakse, in the course of a discussion in which several "comrades" spoke of ways and means of strengthening the party machinery, said that they should endeavour to have at least one Sama Samajist in each of the 400 Village Committees in the Island and also in the Urban Councils. It was by such means that they would be able to do vigorous work in the country.

Resolutions referring to the "coming together of the Imperialist and Fascist blood brothers in the recent Munich Pact," the demand for complete independence for Ceylon, the condemnation of the "back-door deputations" to Whitehall, and the substitution of a cabinet system for the present Committee system and the nationalisation of road transport were passed.

It was late in the night when the discussion on t seventeen resolutions ended.

33. SPECIAL SESSIONS, 4 MARCH 1939

A. Preparation for the Special Sessions on Constitutional Reform[1]

(1) J. E. Amaratunga—Victor C. Perera, 27 January 1939

My dear Mr. Perera,

I rang up Sir Baron about the special session. Please fix up the session for Saturday the 4th Feb. and send off the notices tomorrow on the terms supported earlier. The actual resolutions will be drafted at the meeting of the Executive Committee fixed for the 1st Feb. at 3.30. Please have an extra set of envelopes addressed to the delegates ready so that the resolutions can be posted almost immediately after the Ex. Com. meeting.

Yours Sincerely,
J. E. Amaratunga.

(2) Notice re Executive Committee Meeting, 27 January 1939

Congress Office,
"Treleaven"
Union Place,
Colombo,
27th January 1939.

NOTICE

A meeting of the Executive Committee of the Ceylon National Congress will be held on Wednesday the 1st February, 1939 at 3.30 p.m. at the above place to consider the report of the sub-committee appointed to draft the resolutions to be placed before the special session to be held to consider the reform proposals.

Victor C. Perera,
J. E. Amaratunga,
Hony. Secretaries, C. N. C.

1. From C.N.A., 60/117, 118, 119-135.

(3) A. W. H. Abeyesundere—The Hony. Secretaries, C. N. C., 27 January 1939

27.1.39.

The Hony. Secys.
C. N. C.

Dear Sirs,

Please submit the following resolution to the Executive Committee at its next meeting.

Yours truly,
Signed: A. W. H. Abeyesundere.

"The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that the following amendments should be made to the undermentioned motions of the Legal Secretary on the Governor's proposals to reform the present constitution, and the Congress resolves not to accept any new Constitution which contains provisions repugnant to the principles embodied in the said amendments :

(amendments appear in the Sub-Committee's Report) "

(4) A. W. H. Abeyesundere—The Hony. Secretaries, C. N. C., 1 February 1939

"Virsanthi",
Campbell Place,
Colombo.
1.2.39.

The Hony. Secys.
C. N. C.

Dear Sirs,

I give notice of the following resolution to be moved at the special sessions of the Congress on 4th March, 1939 :

The Ceylon National Congress resolves not to accept any Constitution which contains provisions repugnant to the following principles, which have been adopted by the Congress and which are embodied in the motions of the

Legal Secretary and the Amendments to same of them made by the Congress at its special sessions held on the 4th March, 1939 :

(*a*) Removal of the Officers of State,

(*b*) Abolition of the Executive Committee System of Government,

(*c*) Adoption of the Cabinet System of Government,

(*d*) The Establishment of an Independent Public Service's Commission,

(*e*) Commission Curtailment of the Governor's Powers.

A. W. H. Abeyesundere.

Yours truly,

(5) **The Report of the Sub-Committee appointed to draft the Resolutions to be placed before the Special Session to consider the Reform Proposals.**

All the members of the Sub-Committee, which was composed of the President, and Messrs. D. S. Senanayake, H. W. Amarasuriya, J. N. Jinendradasa, Geo. de Silva and J. E. Amaratunga (convenor) were present. It was decided to adopt the motions on reforms to be brought in the State Council by the Legal Secretary, making such amendments as were found necessary.

The following are the motions and the amendments :

Franchise

Motion No. 9 : That the qualifications for the entry on the registers of voters for the election of members of the State Council shall remain as prescribed by the Ceylon (State Council Elections) Order-in-Council, 1931, as amended by the Ceylon (State Council Elections) Orders in Council, 1934 and 1935.

This motion should be amended by the addition of the following words at the end after the substitution of a comma for the full-stop:

Subject to regulations governing the Indian franchise being duly framed and properly implemented in accordance with the proposals of Sir Herbert Stanley and the decisions of the Secretary of State as contained in Sessional Paper XXXIV of 1929.

Motion No. 10. That seats in the State Council for which members are elected shall continue to be filled on a territorial basis.

(No amendment)

Re-allocation of Seats

Motion No. 11: That with a view to securing greater representation for minority communities a Committee shall be appointed by His Excellency the Governor with the following terms of reference: 'To consider the present electoral areas of the Island and to advise what changes or additions could be reasonably made with a view to affording more chances for the return of candidates belonging to the minority communities and to securing adequate representation of the Kandyan rural interest

is motion should be amended by altering the terms of ence so as to read as follows:

To consider the present electoral areas of the Island nd to advise what changes or additions could be asonably made *on the basis of a minimum and a aximum number of probable voters for each electoral a* with a view to affording more chances for the urn of candidates belonging to minority communities to securing adequate representation of the Kandyan l interest.'

Motion No. 12: That the eight nominated seats in the State Council shall be distributed as follows:

(a) Four for Europeans;

(b) Two for Burghers;

(c) Two for unrepresented interests, if any.

(No amendment)

Qualification of Members

Motion No. 13: That the Constitution should provide that no member of the State Council shall occupy his seat whilst the allowance paid to such person as a Member of the State Council is under seizure by a court of law.

(No amendment)

Motion No. 14: That the Constitution should provide that, if the allowance paid to a Member of the State Council is under seizure at any date posterior by three months or more to its first seizure, the seat of such Member shall become vacant.

Abolition of Present Form of Government

Motion No. 15: That the administration of the groups of subjects and functions specified in the Second Schedule to the Ceylon State Council Order-in-Council, 1931, shall no longer be entrusted to Executive Committees of the State Council as provided by Act 34 of the said Order and such Executive Committees shall be abolished.

(No amendment)

Motion No. 16: That the three Officers of State, as constituted by Articles 6 and 7 of the said Order-in-Council, shall no longer be charged with the subjects and exercise the functions allotted to them in the Second Schedule to the said Order.

This motion should be amended so as to read as follows: That the three Officers of State,.... shall no longer be *retained and be* charged with the subjects and exercise the functions allotted to them in the Second Schedule to the said Order *and the said subjects and functions shall be administered by duly appointed Ministers.*

Motion No. 17: That the Board of Ministers, as constituted by Art. 50 of the said order, shall be abolished.

(No amendment)

Introduction of Cabinet System

Motion No. 18: That the functions of the Executive Committees, Officers of State and Board of Ministers shall be entrusted to a Cabinet with collective responsibility.

(No amendment)

Motion No. 19: That the resignation of a first or second Ministry after a general election shall not necessarily involve a dissolution of the State Council, but that the Governor shall at those stages dissolve the State Council only if, in his judgment, there is an issue that can and should be put to determination by a general election. The resignation of a subsequent Ministry shall involve a dissolution of the State Council, unless the Governor sees reason to the contrary.

(No amendment)

Motion No. 20: That in the formation of the Ministry, the Governor shall, from amongst the members of the State Council, of his own initiative and in his own discretion, select and appoint as Chief Minister the person most likely in his opinion to command public confidence.

(No amendment)

Motion No. 21 : That the Chief Minister *in consultation with the Governor* shall *select* the persons to fill the remaining portfolios in the Ministry who shall be appointed by the Governor provided the right of the Governor, as now prescribed by Article 35 (2) of the said order, to decline to appoint any such person shall be retained.

This motion should be amended by the deletion of the words "*in consultation with the Governor*" and the substitution of the word "nominate" for the word "select" in lines one and two of the motion.

Motion No. 22 :: That the Royal Instructions to the Governor shall contain the following clause : "In *making appointments to his* Cabinet of Ministers Our Governor shall use his best endeavours to select his *Ministers in the following manner*, that is to say, in consultation with the Chief Minister, to appoint those persons (in so far as practicable, members of important minority communities) *who will be best in a position to* command the confidence of the State Council. But, in so acting, he shall bear constantly in mind the need for fostering a sense of joint responsibility *among* his Ministers."

(*No amendment*)

Motion No. 23 : That the approval of the Cabinet shall be necessary for any ministerial measure, decision, *programme, order* involving increased expenditure, the creation or alteration of general or departmental policy, or departure from established practice on matters of major *importance*.

(*No amendment*)

Motion No. 24 : That legislative and executive measures which at present require the approval or ratification of the Governor shall continue to require the same.

(No amendment)

Motion No. 25: That the Chief Minister shall in consultation with the other Ministers and with the approval of the Governor appoint persons as deputies to each Minister, such persons being styled Ministers' Deputies.

(No amendment)

Motion No. 26: That a Minister or Minister's Deputy shall resign if requested so to do by the Chief Minister with the consent of a majority of the Cabinet.

(No amendment)

Motion No. 27: That the Ministry shall resign on the passing by the State Council of a Vote of No-confidence but resignation of the Cabinet in any other circumstance shall be voluntary and not compulsory.

(No amendment)

Proposals Regarding Officers of State

Motion No. 28: That the "Subjects and Functions" as allocated to the Chief Secretary under the present Constitution shall be re-allocated on the lines indicated in para. 23 of the Governor's Despatch dated June 13, 1938, to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

This motion should be amended so as to read as follows: That the "Subjects and Functions" as allocated to the Chief Secretary under the present Constitution shall be re-allocated *to duly appointed Ministers.*

Motion No. 29: That the Chief Secretary shall be designated "Principal Secretary to the Governor" and be allocated the functions specified in paras. 32 and 33 of the Governor's Despatch dated June 13, 1938, to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

This motion should be amended so as to read as follows: That *the post of Chief Secretary shall be abolished and a new officer designated "Principal Secretary to the Governor" shall be appointed* and be allocated the functions specified in paras. 32 and 33 of the Governor's Despatch dated June 13, 1938, to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

Motion No. 30: That the Legal Secretary shall be retained with the title of Legal Adviser and exercise the functions allocated to him and specified in para. 24 of the Governor's Despatch dated June 13, 1938, to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

This motion should be amended so that the effect would be that the Office of Legal Secretary would be abolished and in its place a Ministry of Justice be created.

Motion No. 31: That the "Subjects and Functions" under the heading "Establishments" allocated to the Financial Secretary under the provisions of the Ceylon Government Manual of Procedure together with the office and staff of the Controller of Establishments shall be administered by the Public Services Commission.

This motion should be amended to read: That the "Subjects and Functions" under the heading "Establishments" allocated to the Financial Secretary.... shall *not be administered by the Public Services Commission but continue to be administered by the Treasury under the Minister of Finance.*

Motion No. 32: That the "Subjects and Functions" *other than those under the heading "Establishments"* allocated to the Financial Secretary under the Ceylon Government Manual of Procedure shall be transfered to a newly constituted Minister of Finance.

The motion should be amended by the deletion of the words "other than those under the heading 'Establishments'."

Motion No. 33: That the Financial Secretary should be retained with the title of Financial Adviser and exercise the functions allocated to him and *specified in para 26 of the Governor's Despatch* dated June 13, 1938, *to* the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

This motion should be amended so as to read *as follows: That the Financial Secretary should not* be retained with the title of Financial Adviser *nor* exercise the functions allocated to him and specified in para 26 of the Governor's Despatch *dated June 13, 1938, to the Secretary of State for* the Colonies and *the Financial Adviser shall be appointed who will be the Head of the Treasury under the Minister of Finance.*

Motion No. 34: That the Constitution shall provide as follows: (*a*) that no measure of financial or legal implications shall be introduced without prior consultation by the Cabinet with the appropriate adviser.

(*b*) that the Governor's powers to assent to or to refuse for the signification of His Majesty's pleasure legislation, shall remain as now.

(*c*) that the reports to the Secretary of State on legislation by the Legal and Financial Secretaries as now required by the Royal Instructions shall in future be made by the Legal and Financial Advisers.

(*d*) that no vote of no-confidence in a Cabinet shall be moved on an issue in which a measure passed by the Council has been disallowed by His *Majesty or refused assent or ratific* by

Governor or on any issue arising out of an order by His Majesty in Council or a Governor's Ordinance.

The motion should be amended by the deletion of clauses (*a*), (*c*) and (*d*).

Motion No. 35: That the number of members of the Public Services Commission shall be increased by the vesting in the Governor of the power to appoint, in addition, three unofficial persons for a period of three years with right at his discretion to extend such period of service. Such unofficial members shall be paid an allowance.

This motion should be amended by the deletion of all the words in the motion and the substitution of the following:

That the Public Services Commission shall be composed of three persons specially selected and appointed by the Governor but unconnected with the Executive or Legislature and holding no other appointment under the Crown in Ceylon either during or after the tenure of their office as Commissioners.

Motion No. 36: That the functions of the Public Services Commission shall be as specified in para 29 of the Governor's Despatch dated June 13, 1938, to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

This motion should be amended as follows:

That the functions of the Public Services Commission shall be advisory on all matters relating to the Public Services including appointments, transfers, and disciplinary measures.

Compensatory Addition to Pensions

Motion No. 37: That Article 88 of the said Order in Council shall be so amended so as to allow of the special pension regulations being altered to

provide that the compensatory addition shall be granted only if the Governor is satisfied that an officer's retirement does in fact represent loss of career.

Re-Allocation of Subjections and Functions

Motion No. 38: That in the event of the Cabinet System of Government being adopted, "Subjects and Functions" shall be re-allocated as recommended in para. 36 of the Governor's Despatch dated June 13, 1938, to the Secretary of State for the Colonies.

The amended motion should read:

That in the event of the Cabinet System of Government being adopted, "Subjects and Functions" shall be re-allocated subject to such alterations rendered necessary by including the creation oftwo new Ministries of Justice and Finance.

Governor's Powers

Motion No. 39: That the Governor's powers shall not be curtailed but shall be defined with more clarity and precision in the Order in Council making provision for the Constitution.

The motion should be amended as follow:

That the Governor's powers of legislating independently of the concurrence of the State Council shall be abolished and that his other powers shall be defined with more clarity and precision in the Order in Council making provision for the Constitution.

J. E. Amaratunga,
Convener.

(6) Victor C. Perera—Sir Baron Jayatilaka, 6 February 1939

Congress Office,
"Treleaven"
Union Place,
Colombo, 6.2.39.

Dear Sir Baron,

Please get your printers to print 500 copies each of the agenda for the special sessions in English or Sinhalese. Kindly let me know whether the 1st March at 5 p.m. will suit you for the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

Yours Sincerely,
Victor C. Perera,
Jt. Hony. Secy, C. N. C.

(7) Sir Baron Jayatilaka—Victor C. Perera, n.d.

1. The Press have no one competent to translate the document. Pl. get it translated & return it to me at once.

2. Has Mr. Senanayake agreed to move the first resolution ?

3. March 1st will suit me. What is the business to be transacted on that day ? Ex. Co. need not meet unless there is some business to be placed before it.

D. B. Jayatilaka.

B. Agenda[1]

Ananda College Hall, Colombo, 2 p.m.

Resolution No. 1. The Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake to move :

"That the Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that the following amendments should be made to the motions of

1. C.N.A., 60/46.

the Legal Secretary on the Governor's proposals to reform the present Constitution:

1. *Franchise:* That the qualifications for the entry on the registers of voters for the election of Members of the State Council shall remain as prescribed by the Ceylon (State Council Election) Order-in-Council 1931, as amended by the Ceylon (State Council Election) Orders-in-Council 1934 and 1935, subject to regulations governing the Indian Franchise being duly framed and properly implemented in accordance with the proposals of Sir Herbert Stanley and the decisions of the Secretary of State as contained in Sessional Paper XXXIV of 1939.

2. *Re-allocation of Seats.* That with a view to securing greater representation for minority communities a Committee shall be appointed by His Excellency the Governor with the following terms of reference:

To consider the present electoral areas of the Island and to advise what changes or additions could reasonably be made on the basis of a minimum and maximum number of probable voters for each electoral area with a view to affording more chances for the return of candidates belonging to minority communities and to securing adequate representation of the Kandyan rural interest.

3. *Officers of State:* That the three Officers of State as constituted by Articles 6 and 7 of the said Order-in-Council, shall no longer be retained, and that the subjects and functions allotted to them in the second schedule of the said Order shall be administered by duly appointed Ministers.

4. *Cabinet:* That the resolution dealing with the Governor's proposal to include in the Royal Instructions a clause relating to the selection of the Cabinet be opposed.

5. *Principal Secretary to the Governor:* That the office of the Chief Secretary shall be abolished and a new officer designated "Principal Secretary to the Governor" shall be

C. Minutes of the Sessions

Summary of the proceedings of a special sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held at the Ananda College Hall on the 4th of March 1939.

Sir D. B. Jayatilaka was in the chair, and there were 62 delegates present.

Mr. Francis de Zoysa moved the main resolution containing the amendments to the Governor's Reforms Despatch. Mr. D. S. Senanayake seconded. Mr. W. R. Wijemanne supported the motion in Sinhalese.

The following amendment, viz. to delete the words "with a view .... minority communities" and the words "with a view to affording" to the end of subsection 2 of Resolution No. 1, was moved by Mr. J. R. Jayewardene. Mr. A. W. H. Abeyesundere seconded. The following spoke for the amendment, viz. Messrs. A. V. Dias, Chandrasena and L. M. Gooneratne.

The following spoke against the amendment, viz. Messrs. H. W. Amarasuriya, W. A. B. Soysa, Stanley de Zoysa, P. Abraham Silva and E. A. P. Wijeyeratne. Mr. Francis de Zoysa replied. The amendment was lost by a large majority, only 5 voting for it. The substantive motion was then unanimously adopted.

Mr. A. V. Dias moved the following amendment,[1] viz:

> In view of the loss of public confidence in the Ceylon National Congress owing to the irresponsible actions of its leaders and as a result of its activities being confined to discussions on Constitutional Reforms to the entire neglect of the economic and social well-being of the people, this meeting of Congress resolves to postpone the discussion of the 1st Resolution until the

1. The motion, with both Sinhalese and English versions, was circulated in a single-page leaflet entitled "Ceylon National Congress" and "Special Session—March 4, 1939," See C.N.A., 60/126.

Congress declares its policy and formulates a programme of work for the economic uplift of this country.

Mr. L. J. Fernando seconded.

The Chairman ruled that Mr. Dias's motion was not an amendment, but that he could move the adjournment of the house if he desired. Mr. A. V. Dias did so, and the motion for adjournment was lost by a large majority, only the mover and the seconder voting for it.

Mr. A. W. H. Abeyesundere moved Resolution No. 2 which was as follows: [see the agenda]. Mr. C. P. G. Abeyewardena seconded.

Mr. Stanley de Zoysa moved as an amendment to delete the word "accept any" and substitute the words "co-operate in working a new." The mover accepted the amendment. The following spoke for the amendment, viz. Messrs. Francis de Zoysa, Stanley de Zoysa, J. R. Jayewardene, E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, A. V. Dias, H. Sri Nissanka; against, the Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake and Mr. W. R. Wijemanne.

The amendment was carried by a large majority, only 5 voting for [*sic*] it.

Mr. Stanley de Zoysa asked for an assurance from the Chairman that Congress members in Council would abide by the decisions of the Congress. The Chairman refused to give such an assurance, but said that he expected Congress members in Council would give due weight to the opinions expressed by Congress.

Joint Hony. Secretary,
Victor C. Perera,
Ceylon National Congress.

D. Delegates Nominated to Attend the Special Sessions, 4 March 1939[1]

BY THE RAMBUKKANA MAHA JANA SABHA[2]

1. W. M. Punchi Banda, President	Kiriwandeniya, Rambukkana
2. N. H. Keerthiratne, Vice-President	'Siri Niwasa,' Rambukkana
3. T. B. G. Kalugalla ..	Pinnawala, Rambukkana
4. K. A. E. Jayatilake ..	Yatapawala, Rambukkana
5. S. M. Kiri Banda ..	Dehiwela, Rambukkana
6. S. D. Waidyaprema ..	Walalgoda, Rambukkana
7. D. B. Weerasinghe ..	Bathambure, Rambukkana
8. P. A. P. Fernando ..	Dehiwela, Rambukkana
9. K. B. Kulatunga Hony. Secretary ..	Kulatunga Press, Rambukkana
10. P. R. Ratnayake ..	Kotagama, Rambukkana

BY THE LANKA MAHA JANA SABHA[3]

11. T. A. de Mel ..	Tea Propaganda Board, Colombo
12. J. A. Dharmakirthi ..	'Islington,' Rajagiriya
13. E. C. H. Fernando ..	60, Marshall Street, Mutwal
14. Rev. J. Simon de Silva	Mutwal
15. Samson C. Siriwardhane	Samsaibo, Pettah
16. D. D. Kodagoda ..	Sinha Sevana, Church St., Negombo
17. G. T. de Silva Seneviratne	Mahawaskaduwa, Kalutara

1. From C.N.A., 60/121, 123, 124.

2. Nominated through a letter dated 25 February 1939 and presumably addressed to the Secretaries of the Congress. Of this group only Nos. 1, 3, 6, 9 and 10 actually attended the sessions.

3. Nominated through a letter to the Hony. Secretaries of Congress dated 1 March, 1939, and signed by the Hony Secretary (indecipherable) of the Lanka Maha Jana Sabha.

18. D. B. Jayasinghe .. Notary Public, Pannipitiya
19 J. S. Raja .. Analyst, Bo Tree Junction, Maradana
20. U. S. Karunaratne .. Lake House, Colombo

GENERAL[1]

21. C. D. A. Gunawardene
22. D. H. Wickremanayake
23. H. M. U. Banda
24. C. Madanayake
25. L. Wickremaratne
26. M. D. A. Jayawardena
27. K. A. Haputantinee
28. J. Disanayake
29. G. P. C. Amarasiriwardena
30. M. A. Julius Silva
31. D. D. Godage .. All (21-31) from Akmeemana

E. Delegates at the Special Sessions, 4 March 1939[2]

Alagiyawanna, D. .. Siyane Udagaha (?), Urupola (?).

Abeyesekere, *Muhandiram*, S. H. .. Panadura delegate.

Adihetty, *Mudaliyar*, J. E. A.

Abeyewardena (?), C. P. G.

1. There is another list in which 11 names are noted under the heading "Names of Delegates."

2. This list is derived from two leaves of paper under the Ceylon National Congress letter-head and entitled "Delegates to the Sessions [illegible]

Chandrasena, Ananda		
Corea, G. C. S.		
de Silva, V. H.	..	Kandy.
de Zoysa, S.		
Dharmasena, T. A.		
Dias, A. M. Clement	..	Gandara.
Dias, Arthur, V.		
Gooneratne, L. M. D.[1]	.	Lanka Maha Jana Sabha.
Hettiarachchi, D. E.	..	Galle Gangaboda Pattu Maha Jana Sabha.
Jayasinghe, D. A.		
Jayewardene, J. R.		
Kalugalle, T. B. G.	..	Rambukkana Mahajana Sabha.
Karunaratne, M. G.	..	Nugegoda Mahajana Sabha.
Kodagoda, D. D.	..	Lanka Mahajana Sabha.
Kulatunga, K. B.	..	Secretary, Rambukkana Mahajana Sabha.
Kurutiyawe (?)		
Perera, G. C. (?)	..	Sri Jayawardenapura Mahajana Sabha.
Perera, G. P.	....	Wadduwa Mahajana Sabha.
Perera, M. R.	..	Wadduwa Mahajana Sabha.
Perera, V. L.		
Punchibanda, W. M.	..	Chairman, Rambukkana Mahajana Sabha.
Ranasinghe, D. E.		
Ranatunga, C. J.		
Ratnayake, P. R.	..	Rambukkana Mahajana Sabha.

1. This could be the person designated as "L. M. Gooneratne" elsewhere in the documents.

Senaratne, D. P.		
Silva, K. A. G.	..	Ambatalenpahale Maha Jana Sabha.
Tantrigoda, A.		
Thiagarajah, S.		
Waidiyaprema, S. D.	..	Rambukkana Mahajana Sabha.
Wijeyanayake, C. de S. A.		Lanka Mahajana Sabha.
Wilson, E. M. D.	..	Kotte.
Wijeyesinghe, D. C.	..	Avissawella.

F. DRAFT REPORT ON THE SESSIONS[1]

The Ceylon National Congress has decided not to co-operate in the working of any Constitution for Ceylon which contains provisions repugnant to the following principles:

(1) Removal of the Officers of State.

(2) Abolition of the Executive Committee system of government.

(3) Adoption of the Cabinet system of government.

(4) The establishment of an independent Public Services Commission.

(5) Curtailment of the Governor's powers.

This resolution was carried by a large majority at a special session of the Congress held at Ananda College on Saturday to consider the reform proposals contained in the Governor's despatch.

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1. From C. N. A., 60/158; a handwritten document. It appeared in the same form in the *CDN*, 6 March 1939. The headlines provided in the draft were as follows:

Ceylon Congress Reform Demands
Five Vital Principles Enunciated
Special Sessions Agrees to Non-Co-operation Demand

Other resolutions passed by the session set out amendments to the motions of the Legal Secretary on the Governor's proposals.

Appeal for Unity

Sir Baron Jayatilaka, the President, was in the chair and prominent among the delegates was a group of young lawyers who have recently joined the Congress. Mr. Francis de Zoysa, K. C., signalised his return to the Congress ranks by moving the first resolution.

Sir D. B. Jayatilaka, the President's Opening Address

In opening the proceedings, Sir Baron said that the Congress had met that afternoon for a special and important purpose, namely, to consider the recommendations contained in the despatch of His Excellency the Governor to the Secretary of State dated June 3, 1938. Apart from the intrinsic merits of these recommendations they must recognize the fact that the Governor is an administrator of wide and long experience with a distinguished record of service; and also he has manifested in many ways that he has very liberal views in regard to these matters. "So it is important that we should consider these recommendations very carefully," said Sir Baron.

Mere Recommendations

"One thing to be borne in mind is the fact that these are mere recommendations. They have not yet been accepted by the Secretary of State and they do not form really a scheme of reforms presented to us.

The despatch has been published for the purpose of eliciting public opinion, the opinion of the people of this country in regard to these suggestions made by the Governor. I expect; when public opinion has expressed itself and the State Council has discussed these proposals and made its recommendations, the Governor will submit these expressions of opinion to the Secretary of State who will in due course formulate his own views upon them. It is just possible that his final views will have to be

considered by us on a future occasion. At the present time we have to express our views upon the recommendations or suggestions made by the Governor."

Referring to the resolutions placed before the meeting. Sir Baron said that they dealt with only the most important points in the Governor's recommendations. There were no resolutions referring to those recommendations which they accepted in principle. Where they deferred from the recommendations of the Governor they had these resolutions placed before the meeting.

Sir Baron then called upon Mr. Francis de Zoysa, K. C. to move the resolution.

Resolution : 14 Amendments to Legal Secretary's Motions

Mr. de Zoysa then moved the following resolution on behalf of the Executive Committee of the Congress: [The resolution follows. It is the same as the resolution listed in the agenda with Mr. D S. Senanayake as mover].[1]

Return to Congress

Speaking on the resolution, Mr. Francis de Zoysa said that there was a time when the Congress platform was very familiar to him. He was now on the Congress platform for the first time after about ten years. He was prepared to forget altogether the activities or inactivities of the Congress during the last ten years and work in it as hard and as *enthusiastically as he did during the previous ten years* provided they were going to reorganise and revitalize the Congress and work it as a definite political party with a well defined policy and clear-cut principles, as their President, Sir Baron Jayatilaka, declared the other day at Panadura.

Appeal to the Ministers

Mr. de Zoysa emphasised that the first plank in their platform should be nationalism as against communalism

1. *Supra*, pp. 1308-11.

He hated communalism among the Sinhalese, more than communalism among minor communities. Ceylon for the Sinhalese was a very good slogan which went down with the ignorant Sinhalese villager.

"Were they, the Congress, going to allow the slogan to be raised," he asked. There were those who said that they did not know what country meant, did not know what Ceylonese meant. He did not wish to use hard words. He did not wish to say these people were either rogues or fools. He wished only to say that such people knew nothing about Ceylon.

They were forgetting that there were about two million non-Sinhalese in Ceylon to about four million Sinhalese of all castes and creeds. There were people who threatened to die for the Sinhalese. The sooner they died, the better it would be for the Sinhalese. There were, on the other hand, those who threatened to exterminate the Sinhalese or at least to prevent them being the major community. They would never succeed in that, unless, of course, all Ceylonese allowed themselves to be dominated by the Indians from the neighbouring continent.

Indians in Ceylon

When he spoke of Indians, he did not forget that they are all Indians in a sense. He was referring to the Indians who come here only to exploit the country and continue to be Indians; to those Indians who, even though they were born in Ceylon and bred in Ceylon and made all their money in Ceylon, were not Ceylonese, but continued to be Indians, looking for Indian honours and appealing to the Indian Government for protection.

He appealed to the Tamils not to stand aloof from the Sinhalese and fight for a few petty Council seats.

He did not mind all the ten additional seats being given to the Northern Province if the elected representatives came, not as Tamil members to fight for the Tamils and

against the Sinhalese, but as Ceylonese to work for the common good of the country, to work shoulder to shoulder with the Sinhalese and other Ceylonese.

Mr. de Zoysa added that the Ceylon Tamil and the Ceylon Muslims by allying themselves with the European and Indian reactionaries, might retard the progress of this country and perhaps provide some justification for the existence of the Sinhala Maha Sabha but would never benefit themselves in any way.

Referring to the Governor's despatch, he said that in spite of a few defects, it was a statesmanlike document. If it was not for their own differences, their own communal cries, he had no doubt the Governor would have recommended full self-government for Ceylon. As it was His Excellency had shown a remarkable appreciation of the situation in this country, and he would strongly recommend their acceptance of his proposals, subject, of course, to the amendments they were proposing now.

Forces of Reaction

"We Must Keep Our Heads Cool"

Mr. D. S. Senanayake, in seconding the motion, said it was a great pleasure to him to find one of the stalwarts of the past, Mr. de Zoysa, back in the Congress fold.

Mr. de Zoyza's wise words, he said, were very timely. They should be very careful in not being driven to antagonise the communalists merely because they had been very provocative. He was in entire agreement that if they were to advance at all they could only do so if they considered themselves nationalists and not merely belong [sic] to one particular community. No one who thought of the greater good of the country would allow the country to be sacrificed.

"We have got to consider national questions in a national way, not taking into consideration any communal interest," he said. "If our interest is a common interest and if for the purpose of assisting the prosperity of this country we have

the people, this meeting of Congress resolves to postpone the discussion of the first resolution until the Congress declares its policy and formulates a programme of work for the economic uplift of the people of this country."

The chairman ruled that it was not an amendment to the resolution.

Mr. Dias then moved it as a motion for the adjournment of the discussion. This was defeated, only Mr. Dias and another voting for it.

Sir Baron Asked For An Assurance

Mr. Stanley de Zoysa said that to prevent a useless discussion he would like the President to give an assurance that in the State Council he would move resolutions in accordance with the Congress resolution.

Sir Baron declined to give such an assurance. He observed, however, that members of the Council who were loyal to the Congress should abide by the decisions of the Congress.

Mr. Stanley de Zoysa: I am quite satisfied with your statment that you are bound by our decisions.

Mr. Francis de Zoysa's motion was carried unanimously after an amendment moved by Mr. J. R. Jayewardene was defeated.

Non-Cooperation If Demands Are Not Met

The following motion was next moved by Mr. A. W. H. Abeyesundere: That the Ceylon National Congress resolves not to accept any Constitution which contains provisions repugnant to the following principles, which have been adopted by the Congress, and which are embodied in the motion of the Legal Secretary, and the amendments to some of them made by the Congress at its Special Sessions held on the 4th March 1939:

(*a*) Removal of the Officers of State.

(*b*) Abolition of the Executive Committee System of Government.

(c) Adoption of the Cabinet System of Govenment.
(d) The establishment of an independent Public Services Commission.
(e) Curtailment of the Governor's powers.

Committee System

Mr. Abeyesundere said that his resolution in effect called upon the Congress not to co-operate in the working of a new Constitution which though basically different from the present Constitution, might introduce an adulterated form of the cabinet system of government containing provisions whereby the present Officers of State were metamorphosed into an inner cabinet, the present Public Service Commission was transformed into a semi-independent one with not merely advisory power, but also with the power of administering establishments, and the present right of the Governor to legislate independently of the concurrence of the Legislature was preserved.

They should wreck such a new Constitution, if [one was] forced upon them. The Congress should raise that issue at a general election If Congress candidates who won at the polls were in a majority, they should paralyse, or if they were in a minority, they should obstruct, the new system of government. That was how non-co-operation in the working of a new Constitution contemplated by his resolution was to be effected.

Non-Co-operation Amendment

Mr. Stanley de Zoysa, with the movers approval, moved an amendment, by deleting "accept" and substituting thereto the words "co-operated in working." He said that Congressmen should not co-operate in working a constitution which fell short of their demands.

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, supporting the amendment, urged that the Congress must stand firmly by its ideal of full responsible government for Ceylon and pursue d' action method of non-co-operation to achiev

The motion as amended by Mr. Stanley de Zoysa was carried by a large majority after a lengthy discussion.

G. Appendices to the Special Sessions, March 1939

(1) Newspaper Report On D. S. Senanayake's Revelations of Minority Group Moves Vis-a-Vis The British Authorities[1]

European Request To Postpone Reforms

Memorial Submitted To Governor

"Time Not Yet Ripe"

Mr. C. G. C. Kerr's Cable to Communal Advocate

A memorial to the Governor, asking for a postponement of any official pronouncement on the question of the reform of the existing constitution, and correspondence on the subject between the signatories to the memorial and Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam, Member for Point Pedro in the State Council, who was at that time in London, and which had come into the hands of Mr. D. S. Senanayake, Minister of Agriculture, were read out by him in the course of his speech at the special session of the Ceylon National Congress on Saturday.

The signatories to the memorial[2] are:

Sir John Tarbat, Chairman of the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce;

Mr. R. C. Scott, Chairman of the Planters' Association of Ceylon;

Mr. R. J. Hartley, Chairman of the Ceylon Estates Proprietary Association;

Mr. C. G. C. Kerr, Chairman of the European Association.

1. *CDN*, 6 March 1939.
2. Also see items 95 : F and 95 : G.

"Growing Public Concern"

The memorialists state that it was hoped that political conditions would settle down and permit the development of some of that spirit of mutual goodwill, which the Governor had sought to promote, but that on the contrary "there has been borne in upon us a general and growing public concern as to the fitness of the time for further concessions owing to the developments arising out of the publication of the findings of what has come to be called the Banks-Jayatilaka Commission."

At the time of the presentation of this memorial to the Governor, the following cablegram was despatched by Mr. Kerr to Mr. Ponnambalam in London:

> Congratulations. Please endeavour persuade Secretary of State to postpone publication reform despatches pending reconsideration as result of present developments.

....

The Memorial

The following is the text of the memorial forwarded to the Governor asking for a postponement of the publication of the Reform Despatches:

> In the names of the bodies subscribing hereunder and on behalf of the interests thereby associated, we would request the privilege of being allowed to submit the following joint representations for the postponement of the publication of pronouncements on the nature, or question, of further reforms of the existing constitution pending clarification of the present state of affairs in the sphere of local politics. With the general acceptance of the principle of the need for further reforms of the present constitution either by modification in certain respects or the introduction of remedial measures, in others, it was hoped that political conditions would settle down and thereby permit of the development of some of that spirit of mutual goodwill which your Excellency has sought to promote, but on the contrary, there has been borne in upon us a general ing

public concern as to the fitness of the time for further concessions owing to the developments arising out of the publication of the findings of what has come to be called the Banks-Jayatilika Commission.

"Blatant Attacks on Police"

It cannot but be felt that the many open and blatant attacks on the Police, both as to personnel and as a force and similarly the unjustifiable impeachment of members of the Commission, if not the Judiciary as a whole, must give cause for grave concern as to the fitness of those concerned to assume the mantle of further responsibility in the direction of self-government.

Not to enlarge upon a state of affairs that must already have merited Your Excellency's most grave consideration, it is felt that the time is not yet ripe for the introduction of all Reforms that may possibly have been contemplated.

Disquieting Situation

Further, in view of the publicity that has been given to the likelihood of early pronouncements as to the nature of the revisions in question, we hereby join together in requesting that you may be good enough to see your way to consider the suppression of such promulgations, both in Ceylon and the United Kingdom, until such time at least as the present disquieting situation has been counteracted all immediately possible repercussion of the current controversy has been consigned to the limbo of the past.[1]

It is the eeling of the signatories that no further amplification of these points is necessary, but should Your Excellency be of the opinion that these representations

1. The sentence has been rendered as it appears in the newspaper.

should be substantiated in person, we, as the accredited representatives of the interests concerned, would be glad to have the privilege of waiting upon Your Excellency with that end in view.

We Might Have Succeeded

Mr. Ponnambalam's reply (dated December 12, 1938) to Mr. Kerr's cable is as follows:

My Dear Kerr, Thank you so much for cable you sent me and the message of encouragements it contained. I promptly brought it to the notice of MacDonald and the Marquis of Dufferin and the permanent officials of the Colonial Office.

On the whole, but for the undertaking MacDonald has given to the House of Commons that the despatches will be published, we might have succeeded fully. As it is, our combined representations together with the persistent questions in the House have helped to postpone publication. Meanwhile I am assured that the despatches when published, will not reveal anything final, but will only take the reform question a step further.

I am certain[1] that if the minorities take a firm and united stand that the financial policy of the Island together with the trend of political evolution during the last seven years under the present Constitution were subjected to a close and impartial inquiry by the Parliamentary Committee or Commission, we will definitely get what we want.

For this I hope that the lead you have given your community and that tone you have imparted to public life generally, will be available to us for a very long time yet to come.

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1. The sentence that follows is presented as it appeared in the newspaper.

postponement of constitutional reform until conditions "settle down." From the correspondence which Mr. Senanayake has done the service of disclosing to the public it is evident that the exploiters of minority apprehensions were playing for time, not for conditions to settle down but for communal feelings to be excited by subtle and subterranean tactics, and they cannot now shirk some of the blame for the misrepresentations regarding Ceylon that have been published in newspapers in England. We cannot help regretting that in spite of all the protestations of goodwill the Chamber of Commerce, the European Association and the other bodies concerned should have deliberately allied themselves with the purveyors of rank communalism to put a spoke in the wheel of Ceylon's political progress.

(3) Newspaper Report[1] *on* Francis de Zoysa's Lecture, 8 March 1939

Plea For A United Political Front

Mr. Francis de Zoysa on "Reforms—The Next Step"

What Congress Non-Co-operation Resolution Means.

The very strong, though numerically small, force in the country who have always been opposed to constitutional reforms, were severely criticised by Mr. Francis de Zoysa, K. C., yesterday afternoon in an address delivered at the Ananda College Hall.

Mr. De Zoysa's subject was "The Reforms—the Next Step."

The Chairman, Dr. R. Saravanamuttu, made a plea for unity, by which he said the country could win freedom almost unasked, "instead of sending petitions and deputations to the Secretary of State and the Governor." In introducing Mr. de Zoysa, Dr. Saravanamuttu said that they were met under the stress of impending constitutional changes and at a critical period in the history of

1. *Ceylon Observer*, 9 March 1939.

their progress in nation building. At a time like that it was a pleasure for them to listen to Mr. de Zoysa, a valiant champion of the country in the political field.

"The Only Step"

Mr. Francis de Zoysa in his address said that since 1906 he had been speaking on the subject of Reforms. By the "next step" he personally meant the next and the only step of reforms which secured full responsible government with dominion status. But he wished to speak on the next step the people of Ceylon should take to secure any decent reforms."

"You must always remember" he continued, "that there is a very strong, very powerful, though numerically small force amongst us who have always been opposed and are opposed today to all constitutional reforms, men with vested interests, men really for whose benefit this country was chiefly governed in the past, men who at every stage consistently opposed all reform with all their might.

"*The tactics these men now adopt are less obtrusive than* in the past and therefore more dangerous. You have seen how an incident like the Bracegirdle affair was used to attempt to get the reform question postponed."

Equally Dangerous

"There is another equally dangerous force among us, I should say a more dangerous force. This is the utterly selfish and ambitious men, who either cannot think beyond themselves or their community, or exploit their community for their own ends, who will not place the welfare of the country, before their petty selves. They shout for their community, and there is no shout that goes down so well with the ignorant masses."

Continuing, he said that there was a very prevalent false notion that the abolition of communalism by the Donoughmore Commission was responsible for the aggravation of communal differences. In point of fact

with the Commission's report. Till 1933 or 1934, it was not heard of. The anti-Sinhalese cry was raised only by some of the candidates when the Nothern Province which had boycotted the Council was given the right to elect representatives. The cry was emphasised by the opponents of all reform.

Now the Communal Cry Had Become Deafening

"When I consider those matters," he said "I cannot resist the feeling that the 'next step' we have to take to secure a satisfactory constitution is the proper organisation of a countrywide nationalist party. There are nationalists in every community and in all ranks."

The Ceylon National Congress, he continued, had decided to act as a genuine nationalist party with a nationalist program. He would make an earnest appeal to the thinking section of all communities, Sinhalese, Ceylon Tamils, Ceylon Muslims, and Burghers to join this nationalist party and work for the good of the whole country.

Appeal To Youth

He would appeal in particular to the younger generation. The opening of judicial appointments to members of the Bar had made many of the present-day junior lawyers to shun politics. Law students and medical students in the olden days used to be the heart and soul of political work. They should get them and the university students, especially educated young ladies, to take an interest in politics, without of course, prejudicing their studies.

Dealing with the Governor's despatch he referred to the resolution passed by the National Congress deciding to non-co-operate [sic] with the working of any reforms which were repugnant to the following principles:

Removal of the Officers of State.

Abolition of the Executive Committee system of government.

Adoption of the Cabinet system of government.

The establishment of an Independent Public Services Commission.

Curtailment of the Governor's powers.

Non-Co-operation

These, he said, were the minimum demands and they would see that they were not extravagant. Although a great fuss was being made in certain quarters about the non-co-operation resolution of the Congress they could not possibly do anything less. It only meant that they would appeal to the country. They must do something definite and what was there more constitutional than an appeal to the country. They were told that they should not hold out threats. This was not holding out threats. This was only showing that they were in earnest.

In conclusion he said: "Let us at least make sure that we shall fight the next election on the reforms issue, if needs be. I hope there will be no need, that we will get the reforms we ask for. But we must be ready to face any eventuality. To put it in a few words we must organize ourselves as a strong nationalist party, then we must state clearly what our minimum demands are and if we do not get them appeal to the country on that clear issue."

The Chairman then invited questions and comments on Mr. de Zoysa's address.

Questions

Mr. P. Givendrasinghe said that they were glad that Mr. de Zoysa had returned to the Congress. There were many others who would follow him to the Congress if only the Congress leaders abided by the Congress principles.

Mr. S. R. Paramsothy asked whether the proposed country's party was to be formed after consulting the views of the various parties and the representatives of the people.

Mr. Francis de Zoysa said that the Ceylon National Congress had a very wide open door. It never ran after a Member of Council or anyone else to join it but everyone was welcome.

Mr. Paramsothy: Is it the Congress that is going to be that party ?

The Chairman said that Mr. de Zoysa being a Congress man would naturally speak of the Congress. He thought that in forming parties the representatives of the people in Council should have a very minor place. The tragedy of their political situation today would not have arisen if those members were kept in their places. The representative had to be controlled by those from outside.

Mr. L. M. Gooneratne referred to the Chairman's criticism of the Committee System at a previous public meeting and said that he hoped that his wife would implement that criticism in Council. If the Tamils, the Burghers, the Muslims and the Sinhalese worked on a common platform he was sure the Sinhalese would reciprocate those feelings.

Chairman's Speech

The Chairman said that too much emphasis was laid on constitutional changes when the greater need was for them to learn to unite together, to make the sacrifices necessary and get the freedom they wanted almost unasked, instead of sending peiitions and deputations to the Secretary of State and to the Governor.

The moment they had developed the strength for freedom they would cease to be beggars. It was because they had completely lost sight of that they were in that soul-less position today when called upon to face a question of constitutional reform.

"Today on the one side," the Chairman continued, "we are fighting about the number of seats. This is based on fear and suspicion and is characteristic of a dead soul and not of

freedom. On the other side you find the same kind of thing, everybody asking for something but nobody daring to give something to the country."

"Dead Soul"

"Therefore, I think the next step in the political progress of this country towards freedom is that those of us, who think that this freedom is not a thing that can be given by anybody outside but that it is within our power to get, should organise and get strong. The first thing necessary in such an organisation is to get rid of all those little sectionalisms expressing the dead soul within us.

The moulding influences of Ceylon had brought about greater points of resemblance between the Sinhalese and the Tamils than between the Sinhalese and the Bengalis or between the Ceylon Tamils and the Indian Tamils. How much nearer was the Ceylon Moor to the Sinhalese than to the Bedouin Arab from whom he claimed decent," said the Chairman in conclusion.

Mr. C. Rasaratnam proposed a vote of thanks to the lecturer and to the Chairman.

34. TWENTY-FIRST ANNUAL SESSIONS, 27 DECEMBER 1939

A. AGENDA

Dharmaraja College, Kandy

7.30 a.m. ..	Morning Tea.
9 a.m. ..	Meeting of the Executive Committee.
9.30 a.m. ..	Opening of the sessions with the singing of Sinhalese national songs.
9.45 a.m. to 10.30 a.m. ..	Address by Mr. George E. de Silva, M.C.C., Chairman of the Reception Committee.
10.30 a.m to 11.30 a.m. ..	Presidential address by the Hon. Mr. G. C. S. Corea, Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce.
11.30 a.m. to 1.30 p.m. ..	The Hon. Sir D. B. Jayatilaka, Leader of the State Council and Minister of Home Affairs to propose the adoption of the Congress Policy and Programme. Seconder: Mr. J. R. Jayewardene.
1.30 p.m. ..	Lunch.

1. C.N.A., 60/46.

.. Mr. Dudley Senanayake, M.S.C. to move "That the new Constitution of the Ceylon National Congress shall make provision for—

(1) Congress Committees in—(a) Village Committee areas, (b) U. D. C. areas, (c) Municipal ward areas, elected by primary members in those areas.

(2) Congress Committees in State Council electoral areas elected by members of the committees mentioned in (1) within those areas.

(3) The All-Ceylon Congress Committee elected by the State Council electoral committees.

(4) Working Committee of the Congress chosen by the President for year from the committees mentioned in 3.

Primary members of Congress shall pay a minimum subscription of 25 cts. a year, and that the Executive Committee be empowered to draft rules and regulations on the above lines."

Seconder: Mr. L. M. Gooneratne.

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1.30 p.m.	..	Lunch.

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(4) Working Committee of the Congress chosen by the President for year from the committees mentioned in 3.

Primary members of Congress shall pay a minimum subscription of 25 cts. a year, and that the Executive Committee be empowered to draft rules and regulations on the above lines."

Seconder: Mr. L. M. Goonewratne.

3.30 p.m. to 4 p.m.	..	(*a*) Adoption of the Annual Report. (*b*) Adoption of the Annual Statement of Accounts. (c) Election of an Executive Committee for 1940.
4 p.m. to 5 p.m.	..	Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya, M.S.C. to propose, "That the Ceylon National progress ask that the minimum demands for constitutional reform by the Congress made at its Special Session held on the 4th March, 1939, should be granted before the next General Election of the State Council." Seconder: Mr. Victor C. Perera.
5 p.m.	..	Tea.
N. B. 1.	..	Delegates wanting accommodation and meals for the night of the 26th instant should inform Mr. Victor C. Perera, Joint Hony. Secy. Ceylon National Congress, No. 227, Hulftsdorp on or before the 23rd December, 1939.
N. B. 2.	..	The attention of delegates is drawn to rule No. (4) of article VI of the Congress constitution which reads as follows:— "No amendment shall be permitted to be moved at the annual sessions or at any

other sessions of the Congress, unless at least 24 hours notice of it be given to the Secretaries, and at least one third of the Executive Committee present at a meeting of the Committee convened for the purpose of considering such amendment vote for the inclusion of the amendment in the agenda, provided, however, that the Chairman may allow any amendment to be moved at any sessions with the leave of a majority of the members of such sessions."

(Sgd.) Victor C. Perera,
J. E Amaratunga,
Joint Hony. Secretaries,
Ceylon National Congress.

27th December, 1939.

B. Minutes

Summary of the proceedings of the twenty-first annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held at Dharmaraja College, Kandy, 27.12.39.

The delegates were accommodated at Dharmaraja College, Kandy and were the guests of the Reception Committee of which Mr. George E. de Silva was the chairman.

Proceedings began with the singing of the Sinhalese National Anthem.

Then followed the address by the Chairman of the Reception Committee, Mr. George E. de Silva. The President-elect, the Hon. Mr. G. C. S. Corea, next occupied the chair

and delivered his presidential address. Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa proposed the adoption of the Congress Policy and Programme, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene seconded. The following took part in the discussion, viz. Messrs. George E. de Silva, W. A. de Silva, D. A. Jayasinghe, Dudley Senanayake, L. M. Gooneratne, A. V. Dias, S. A. Rajapakse, Stanley de Zoysa, R. T. Kuruwita Gunasekere, R. S. S. Gunewardene, D. J. B. Senaratne, H. W. Amarasuriya, and C. W. W. Kannangara. After the reply by the mover, the motion was put to the vote and carried unanimously. An adjournment was then made for lunch. On resuming, Mr. Dudley Senanayake moved:

That the new Constitution of the Ceylon National Congress shall make permission for—

(1) Congress Committees in—

(*a*) Village Committee areas,

(*b*) U. D. C. areas,

(*c*) Municipal ward areas,

elected by primary members in those areas;

(2) Congress Committees in State Council electoral areas elected by members of the Committees mentioned in (1) within those areas;

(3) All-Ceylon Congress Committee elected by the State Council electoral Committee;

(4) Working Committee of the Congress chosen by the President for the year from the Committees mentioned in (3);

Primary members of Congress shall pay a minimum subscription of 25 cts. a year, and that the Executive Committee be empowered to draft rules and regulations on the above lines.

Mr. L. M. Gooneratne seconded, Messrs. P. D. S. Jayasekera, George E. de Silva and W. A. Jayasinghe took part in the discussion. The motion was carried unanimously.

The next item on the agenda was the adoption of the annual report and the statement of accounts. Both were unanimously adopted.

The election of the Executive Committee for 1940 then took place. [A list of the Executive Committee follows].

After the election of office-bearers, Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya proposed :—

> That the Ceylon National Congress asks that the minimum demands for constitutional reform by the Congress made at its Special Sessions held on the 4th March 1939, should be granted before the next General Election of the State Council.

Mr. Victor C. Perera seconded. Mr. Stanley de Zoysa proposed the following amendment :—

> That the following words be added to the motion viz: "and such election should not be postponed beyond the period now provided by the Constitution unless it be necessary for the purpose of inaugurating a Constitution which satisfies our demands."

Mr. D. A. Jayasinghe seconded. The mover accepted the amendment, and the motion with the addition of the amendment was unanimously adopted.

A vote of thanks to the retiring office-bearers was unanimously passed. The delegates were the guests of the Vice-President at tea. This concluded the sessions.

Victor C. Perera,
Joint Hony. Secy.
27.12.39.

C. Draft Report on the Sessions[1]

The need for an immediate revision of the Constitution was emphasised by Mr. G. C. S. Corea, President of the Ceylon National Congress, at its first sessions held in Kandy since 1925.

The Congress demand, Mr. Corea pointed out, was contained in the resolution passed at its special session in March this year and consisted of the following:—

(1) removal of the Officers of State,

(2) abolition of the Committee system,

(3) adoption of the cabinet system,

(4) establishment of an independent Public Services Commission, and

(5) curtailment of the Governor's powers.

Mr. George E. de Silva, chairman of the Reception Committee, in welcoming the delegates, who numbered over three hundred, declared that the aim of the Congress was to gather into its fold Ceylonese of all races and creeds.

The motion adumbrating the policy and programme of the Congress was moved by Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa in place of Sir Baron Jayatilaka.

The sessions were held at Dharmaraja College. commencing at 9.30 a.m., and among those present were Sir Cudah Ratwatte, Mr. W. A. de Silva, Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara, Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, Mr. Dudley Senanayake and Mr. R. S. S. Gunewardene.

Proceedings commenced with the singing of the national song in Sinhalese. The chairman of the Reception Committee then addressed the gathering.

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1. From *C. N. A.*, *60/103*; with the exception of George E. de Silva's speech, this report is a handwritten manuscript. It appeared in the *CDN*, 28th December 1939, under the following captions as supplied in the draft:—

Congress Demands for Reforms
Aims to Unite Communities
Relations with India

George E. de Silva's Address[1]

Brother and sister delegates, ladies and gentlemen, on behalf of the Ceylon National Congress, I have great pleasure in offering you a hearty welcome to this historic town. I deeply appreciate the honour you have conferred on me by appointing me for a second time the Chairman of the Reception Committee. For over a quarter of a century, I have endeavoured to serve my fellow countrymen to the best of my ability, and whenever I succeeded in accomplishing the slightest thing to alleviate the condition of the masses, it gave me the greatest pleasure and satisfaction.

If you, ladies and gentlemen, enjoy your stay here, in spite of any shortcomings there may be in the arrangements, my Committee and I will be very grateful to you.

The Ceylon National Congress has been singularly fortunate in having as its first leaders men of the calibre of Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, Sir James Peiris, Mr. H. J. C. Pereira K. C., Mr. F. R. Senanayake, Mr. E. T. de Silva and others. The only way in which we can pay a worthy tribute to their leadership and their great battle in the cause of freedom, is by endeavouring to emulate the singleness of purpose and the patriotism which inspired them.

To be true to the lead they have given, we must march forward with renewed vigour until we achieve our goal as a self-governing dominion in the British Commonwealth of Nations.

Sir Hugh Clifford, the great empire builder, has referred to Ceylon as the oldest and most advanced of the crown colonies. A great Ceylon patriot has said that the history of Ceylon is not the history of a semibarbarous people, but the history of a people who have been pre-eminent in architecture and civilization for a period of nearly 24

1. Printed in a pamphlet of 5 pages by the Union Printing Works, Kandy. The *CDN* report only provides a concise version of this speech.

centuries. The gigantic works of irrigation, the magnificent temples now in ruins, although assailed over a period of more than 2,000 years by the destructive forces of nature as well as by human destroyers who invaded this country in the distant past, yet remain to excite the admiration of the best known engineers of modern times.

Of late, attempts have been made to hamper the activities of the Ceylon National Congress by various insidious agencies, but in spite of these efforts, I am glad to say we have grown from strength to strength. The Ceylon National Congress being a very human institution is bound to make mistakes, but at the same time we are also human enough to recognise our failings and to rectify them.

In the disturbed and unsettled state of world affairs, we have to move with caution and foresight, keeping before us always the great aim of our political existence. The future may be veiled in obscurity but we can always expect the right results if we think rightly and act rightly in the cause of freedom.

The aim of the Ceylon National Congress is to bring to its fold Ceylonese of all races and creeds. It is only such a body which can help Mother Lanka to regain her freedom and self respect. Those who endeavour to create and foster communal dissension and suspicion can never be characterised as patriots or the true sons of our beloved Lanka.

It is my great hope and ambition to see a United Lanka marching forward cheerfully to the goal of freedom. I appeal to every Community in Ceylon, Sinhalese, Tamil, Burgher, Muslim and last but not least European, or any other community residing in this Island to join together in creating inter racial harmony in this our Island-home.

When England gives us self government, as I know she will in the near future, we can assure England that she has not trusted us in vain. We sons of Lanka are a grateful people and we respond to kindness in a most remarkable

way. If such a grant is not made we shall redouble our energy and keep our agitation till we achieve self government. The Democracies of the world are being challenged today by the totalitarian states of the world who believe in the triumph of autocratic rule. We must place our whelehearted support on the side of England and the other democratic countries in order that their grim fight against the aggressor countries of the world will end in a triumph for world freedom.

England, France and America believe that a nation, however humble, however small, has a right to exist and maintain her independence without fear of invasion by a more powerful aggressor. We are entirely with them in the noble war they are engaged in at the present time. The triumph of the democracies will also be our day of triumph, for, England will then remember our own struggle for independence, and grant us that measure of self government we have been asking for all those years. We have provided all we can to expedite the defeat of Germany, so that small nations can live their own life.

In 1931 when the Donoughmore reforms were given to us, there were experts on constitutional law and others who expected the reform scheme to end in disaster owing to the inherent defects in the recommendations of the Donoughmore Commission. The Commission gave us the benefit of adult suffrage, and gave the [illegible] to communalism. We have worked the new Constitution for a period of eight years and during that time, we have found how the power seemingly given to the State Council could be [illegible] aside, whenever the occasion demanded it.

When we accepted the new Constitution we did so with a desire to give it a fair chance and to show the [illegible] Empire and others, that we [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] be placed in us, who [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] [illegible] for over 2,500 years. Self government [illegible] [illegible] villages from very [illegible]

When the reform debate took place in the State Council quite recently the whole issue was clouded by an outburst of mischievous communalism. This, to say the least, was very deplorable. Communalism can only create suspicion among friendly communities and can do no good to anyone.

Quite recently there has been an unfortunate misunderstanding between India and Ceylon. We who look to India for inspiration and guidance cannot possibly entertain anything but a feeling of love and affection for her, our mother country, and the land which has produced that great world figure Mahatma Gandhi and Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru the patriot.

We are fortunate that Jawaharlal Nehru paid a visit to us and gave us an opportunity of explaining to him our own economic difficulties, which he, as the great statesman that he is, was well able to understand and appreciate.

We are looking forward to the day when India and Ceylon will be given self government and that both countries will then be able to march side by side as self respecting members of the British Commonwealth of Nations.

Before I call upon the President-elect to take the chair may I once more appeal to you to sink all differences and work selflessly and vigorously to achieve the aims and ambitions of the Congress.

During the 8 years of the State Council's existence successful efforts have been made to develop and promote the agricultural, industrial and commercial interests of our island.

Vigorous measures have also been taken to improve the sanitation of the country and the health of our people.

One of the subjects nearest to the hearts of the founders of the Congress was the propagation of higher education in Ceylon and the establishment of a University. Great

progress has been achieved in this direction. The University will be established in our midst and the dream of the Congress will then be a realised fact.

In the eternal fitness of things this ancient city of our Kings will, in the near future, be entrusted with the custody *of the Regalia of the Rulers of her glorious past.*

Sir Andrew Caldecott came to Ceylon at a most critical period in the history of this country His task has not been at all easy but he has fully justified the high opinion we had of him by turning a deaf ear to murmurs of sycophants and the whispers of contemptible public enemies who endeavoured to poison his political outlook. The statesman that Sir Andrew is, has been able to realise the grave dangers of communalism to the progress and future of any country and he has looked askance at the unreasonable demands, of a fifty fifty representation, by a few short sighted and mischievous-minded members of a community, for which we all have a great deal of respect and regard. Once again let me congratulate Sir Andrew on behalf of the Congress for the masterly manner in which he has handled the political situation and for the sympathy he has shown towards the aspirations of our people.

It is now my pleasant privilege to introduce to you your President elect, who really requires no introduction from me, for the name Corea is household word in Ceylon in the cause of Freedom. Mr. G. C. S. Corea himself is well known to you and I have no doubt that during the year 1940, the work of the Congress will progress by leaps and bounds, under his careful and active guidance.

I have great pleasure in calling upon Mr. Corea to take the chair.

G. C. S. Corea's Presidential Address

In the course of his presidential address, Mr. G. C. S. Corea, Minister of Labour, Industry, and Commerce, said:

"The first thing we have to do is to strengthen Congress. The measure of our strength will also be the measure of

our achievement, and it is only by having a virlic [*sic*] and powerful Congress based on the confidence and respect of the people that we can do any lasting good. Unfortunately, we are faced with the fact that owing to many reasons we are not in as strong a position as we should be. We cannot allow this state of affairs to continue. Foremost in my policy for this year, therefore, will be the task of restoring Congress to its pristine vigour and strength.

Time was when Congress spoke with undoubted power and authority, this was due to the enthusiastic and country wide support it received. Congress still maintains the same progressive and liberal ideas as in the past. It still has the same noble aims and the same high principles on which it was founded, but as I said before we know we are not receiving that full measure of support from the public that a body of this importance requires. It must, therefore, be our purpose to win that support this year. For many years past we have not had the support of the minority community. It would be a pity if this is allowed to continue.

Differences of opinion and clashes of interests must always occur amongst all peoples, but surely it is the part of wisdom and patriotism to compose those differences in a reasonable way, especially when we know for a fact that all Ceylonese of every community desire to obtain complete self-government and to improve the lot of their fellowmen. Congress was founded to embrace all communities within its fold. That being so, I am sure it must be possible even now to restore goodwill and understanding between the various communities so that all differences may be composed.

Transient Phase

The political horizon in Ceylon in recent times has unfortunately been clouded by communal suspicions. Looking upon this manifestation as only a transient phase, and willing to take all reasonable measures to dissipate them, I wish to assure all communities that Congress can and will take a rational and a practical view of the needs

of all communities as forming one single political entity, the Ceylonese Community. I, therefore, appeal to all communities especially, to my Sinhalese brethren, to give up communal political organizations and to re-enter Congress, within whose fold they can obtain justice and fairplay. By so doing we can make a united effort to win political freedom which will ensure the lasting happiness of our people.

Congress could also have been stronger if its supporters had realised that they could not allow their energies to slacken in the belief that a representative State Council and elected Ministers with large executive powers could be trusted to look after the needs of the people. Therefore, a strong, well-informed and honest public opinion has to be created. We must, therefore, change over from lukewarm support into vigorous activity.

Party Discipline

Another reason which has undoubtedly affected Congress to its detriment is the disregard on occasions, even by prominent Congressmen, of the fundamental principles of Congress and the lack of any effective system of discipline and control. We propose to take steps to avoid the recurrence of any such laxity in the future. Under the new constitution which we ask you to accept today we seek to place Congress on a fully representative footing and to make Congress work as a party subject to strict party discipline.

Complaint has also been made that Congress allows itself to be satisfied with meeting annually and passing various resolutions which are not carried into effect. This is not altogether a justifiable complaint. We cannot forget that the political progress so far made is entirely due to the exertions of Congress. That alone is no mean achievement, but we cannot deny that there is some justification for this complaint because we feel that more work to benefit the people could have been done.

Programme of Work

We have been somewhat lethargic and lukewarm. We, therefore, realising this, propose to avoid it. As you will see, our first resolution indicates the programme of work we have drawn up for this year, and I wish you to believe that we intend to devote our fullest energy to carry out that programme. Apart from political activities, there is much work to be done in the country, and it is our determination to set about this big task with real earnestness.

Chronic Ailment

Another serious and chronic ailment from which Congress has suffered has been, and continues to be, the lack of adequate funds. This has prevented it from undertaking a country-wide campaign. We propose to overcome this malady. I propose that within the first three months of this year we raise a fund of not less than a lakh of rupees. This is no doubt a big task. It is by no means an impossible task. We look to our wealthy friends who have the interest of the country at heart, and there are more than a few of these, to support us.

But even if this support is not forthcoming, which I doubt very much, it seems to me quite a practicable proposition to enroll one hundred thousand members, each paying one rupee. I have ventured to lay bare some of our deficiencies, which have weakened us to some extent, not for any pleasure it gives me to relate a tale of woe, but with a view to encourage us to face the situation and to avoid the easy course of make-believe that all is well with Congress. In this way only can we create confidence amongst ourselves and also win the confidence of those who at present time are not with us.

Ladies and gentlemen, you will now see how important is the first plan of our programme, namely the strengthening of Congress. Can we achieve a nobler or grander end than to devote all our energies to this work of strengthening Congress ? I look with confidence to your enthusiastic support.

Dominion Status

Our political goal is dominion status within the meaning of the Statute of Westminster. The State Council and Ceylonese Ministers have amply demonstrated the fitness and capacity of Ceylonese being entrusted with full powers of government. They took charge of the Government with the limitations placed on them, without previous experience, and under extremely difficult circumstances, at a time when the effects of a worldwide depression were at their worst. They have not only steered the ship of state safely but they have also done a great deal to ameliorate the condition of the people.

Although we feel we are fit for and are justly entitled to dominion status we would refrain, at this juncture when the Empire is engaged in a serious war, from pressing for the acceptance of the demand for dominion status. We have been assured that this war was undertaken to ensure the freedom and independence of small nations and when the war ends in victory for the allies we are confident that that freedom which Britain holds so sacred will be granted in the fullest measure to us also. In the meantime, however, we have felt constrained to urge on the British Government the urgent need for an immediate revision of the present Constitution. We feel that continuance of the present form of Government will not only debar our progress but will be fraught with grave danger to the country, particularly at a time of war. We therefore strongly press for an immediate reform of the Constitution, so that the next election may be held under a Constitution free from the defects of the present one.

Minimum Demands

Our demand for a revision of the Constitution is clearly stated in the resolution passed at a special meeting of Congress in March this year.

It consists of:

(a) Removal of the Officers of State,

(b) Abolition of the Committee System of vern nt,

enable a frank and full discussion of such differences of opinion between the two countries along with negotiations for a trade agreement. India is a great and powerful neighbour and striving as she is for her own political and economic freedom, I hope it will not be said that she cannot understand our desire to look after her interests with perfect freedom. I sincerely hope that the leaders in India will accept our assurance that our goodwill towards her still remains and that we look forward to a continuance of friendly relations between the two countries."

It was announced at the conclusion of the proceedings that towards The Lakh of Rupees Fund appealed for by the President, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene had contributed Rs. 2,500 and Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya, Rs. 1,000, in addition to which a contribution had been promised by Mr. Dudley Senanayake.

Sixty-eight affiliated bodies were represented by 210 delegates at the session. The delegates were entertained to lunch at Lake View Estate (Dharmaraja College) by the Reception Committee headed by Mr. Geo E. de Silva.

In the absence of Sir Baron Jayatilaka, Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa moved the adoption of the "Policy and Programme of the Congress." He commented on the fact that the motion synchronised with the entry of the Congress upon its majority. Hitherto the Congress had, perhaps, confined its activities to the educated section of the community, but hence forward it would go among the people and be truely national. In expression thereof the next session would be held not in a town but in a village.

"A Slave People"

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, seconding the resolution, said that he was ashamed to hear Mr. George E. de Silva's speech as it showed that among them there were those who believed in asking Britain to give them freedom by taking a begging-bowl to London. Rather than resurrect Congress on these ideas it was better to destroy it. This country would never

be granted freedom, for if India and Ceylon were given freedom the British Empire would cease to exist. "Freedom was our birthright and we must secure it by our own efforts." Being a resident of Kandy, Mr. de Silva could not forget that a hundred yards from that spot the freedom that Lanka enjoyed for 2,400 years had been destroyed by British Imperialism 125 years ago. It was fitting that in that city they should dedicate themselves to winning back that lost liberty.

"We today are a slave people living in a subject country. As a result of that slavery large sums of money produced by our labour went into the hands of foreigners while our people are poverty-stricken, ridden with disease, landless and uneducated."

Continuing, Mr. Jayewardene said that the Congress policy and programme showed ways and means of remedying these conditions.

Mr. Arthur V. Dias asked the permission of the chair to add the following to the statement of Congress policy:

> The Ceylon National Congress will do everything possible to check the undesirable tendency among laymen to use the term "hamuduruwo" among themselves as this term is specially meant only for the Ministers of religion and also because the use of this term among laymen tends to increase the pride of some more fortunately placed and to decrease the self-respect of others not so fortunate; and thereby fosters the already growing but very unhappy cleavages among our people.

The President (Mr. G. C. S. Corea) declined to give permission as the amendment was irrelevant.

The resolution was carried unanimously.

New Constitution

Mr. Dudley Senanayake moved the adoption of the new constitution of the Congress. Without a proper organisation, he said, the previous resolution with its [illegible]

Congress to the country would be futile. Under the new constitution the Congress would be on a solid foundation and fully representative of the people and could really speak for the country.

Mr. L. M. Gooneratne seconded the resolution.

Mr. P. D. S. Jayasekera said the constitution should be modelled on that of the Indian Congress.

Cabinet System

Mr. D. A. Jayasinghe proposed an amendment to the effect that the Working Committee should be elected and not chosen by the President.

Mr. Arthur V. Dias opposed the amendment on the ground that the President-elect should have the loyalty and confidence of the Congress. *Mudaliyar* N. Wickremaratne said the Congress asked for a cabinet system of government where the Premier chose his own Ministers. In the face thereof it was inconsistent to object to the President nominating his own Working Committee.

The amendment was unsupported and the motion was carried.

Minimum Demand

Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya moved that:

> The Congress asks that the minimum demands for Constitutional Reform made at its Special Session held on the 4th March, 1939, should be granted before the next General Election of the State Council.

Mr. Victor C. Perera seconded.

Mr. Stanley de Zoysa proposed an amendment to be added to the resolution:

> Such election should not be postponed beyond the period now provided for by the Constitution, unless it was necessary for the purpose of inaugurating a new Constitution which satisfies the Congress demand.

Mr. Rajasingham seconded. Messrs. Wilson Perera, G. A. A. Gunatilaka, and W. D. Perera supported. Mr. Amarasuriya accepted the amendment. The resolution as amended was adopted.

In closing the session the President said that, in acknowledging the confidence placed in him and accepting the office, he realised the responsibility he bore. They must raise the funds he had spoken of within the next three months if Congress wished to be an effective organisation.

He thanked the Principal of Dharmaraja College for the use of the hall for the meeting and the Reception Committee for entertaining the delegates.

D. "The Times of Ceylon" on the Sessions[1]

Non-Co-operation If Not Satisfied

Ministers "Utterly Devoid of Self-Respect"

The Ceylon National Congress, at its twenty-first annual sessions held at Dharmaraja College yesterday, unanimously adopted a resolution which, by implication, binds Congress to non-co-operation should the next instalment of reforms not be in accordance with Congress demands.

"I am certain I am correctly interpreting the feeling in the country," said Mr. Victor C. Perera, the Hon. Secretary, "when I say that we do not want the present State Council to have another lease of life."

"Even the Governor told us," he said, "that a party system would by now have emerged in Ceylon if there were a few more dissolutions of the State Council. But it is futile to expect the present Board of Ministers to have sufficient self-respect to resign when they are rebuffed by the Governor's Government."

[1] *Times of Ceylon*, 28 December, 1939. The *CDN* of the 29th December also carried an independent report noted as being "from our own correspondent."

"They are incapable or doing it whether individually or as a Board. Parliamentary conventions have no meaning for them. Time and again they have shown themselves to be a body utterly devoid of self-respect."

In proposing the adoption of the Congress policy and programme, Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa, who had charge of the resolution in the absence of Sir Baron Jayatilaka, commented on the fact that the new policy synchronised with Congress entering on its majority.

Membership of Congress in the past, he said, was confined to the educated classes, but in the new life it was entering upon, all classes would be taken within the fold.

"As a result of our slavery," said Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, who seconded the resolution, "large sums of money produced by our labour go into the hands of foreigners, while our countrymen are poverty-stricken, ridden with disease, landless and uneducated."

Not By Words

"In our policy and programme, we emphasise these evils and shew ways and means of remedying them. In the future our party will be judged, not by words, but by the actions we have taken to accomplish our ideals."

Referring earlier to the speech of Mr. George E. de Silva, Mr. Jayewardene declared: "When I heard Mr. de Silva's speech, I felt ashamed. Rather than resurrect the Congress on those old ideas he mentions I feel it is far better to destroy it.

There are still among Congress workers, men who believe in asking the British to give us freedom; those who believe in taking the begging-bowl to London; those who believe in the good faith of Governors.

The day that India and Ceylon get freedom the British Empire ceases to exist. Freedom is our birthright and we must secure it by our own efforts. The Governor may be a good man, and clever, yet he is part of an evil system, Imperialism."

A Scene

Following a speech by Mr. Dudley Senanayake, Mr. S. A. Rajapakse said that the sentiments expressed by Mr. Senanayake were all very worthy of consideration but it was difficult to reconcile his plea with certain disgraceful episodes in the last elections.

Mr. Senanayake advanced angrily to the edge of the platform and challenged the speaker to be a little more explicit.[1]

An unpleasant termination to the scene was averted by the President (Mr. G. C. S. Corea) directing Mr. Rajapakse to keep to the point.

Mr. W. A. de Silva said it was true that the methods of 20 years ago were no longer currency today. That was no reason for youthful enthusiasts to decry the opinions and advice of men who had served the Congress well.

Mr. Arthur V. Dias rather bemoaned the absence of Sir Baron who, he said, lacked the sense of self-sacrifice of an Indian leader, who would not have been deterred by the illness of a brother from fulfilling a public duty.

Mr. Dias requested leave of the house to amend the policy as set out by Congress by the addition of a resolve to check "the undesirable tendency among laymen to use the term "hamuduruwo" among themselves."

The President declined to permit the amendment.

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[1] This incident was reported in the *CDN* correspondent's version thus "There was a "breeze" when Mr. S. A. Rajapakse, [illegible]

Mr. Dudley Senanayake strode up to the edge of the platform and asked the speaker what he meant Many voices [illegible] but the Chairman intervened, and Mr. Ra[illegible] speak on the resolution."

Determined

Mr. Stanley de Zoyza said " Let us declare here and now that we have done once for all with the methods of our begging-bowl politicians and that, however, much our leaders may have been schooled in the politics of petitions, memoranda, and deputations, the young men at least who have come into the ranks of Congress are prepared and determined to secure liberty by other means if necessary."

He hoped that Mr. Geo. E. de Silva would grow old enough to discard methods which were good enough in the past and the language which was only known in the past—the language of the petition drawer. Self government could only come to them if, through their own efforts, they wrested it from an unwilling ruler.

Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya, Mr. C. W. W. Kannangara, Mr. R. S. S. Gunewardene, Mr. F. P. Senaratne, Mr. Kuruwita Gunasekere and Mr. D. A. Jayasinghe also spoke.

The Resolution

Mr. Dudley Senanayake then moved the following resolution :

That the New Constitution of the Ceylon National Congress shall make provision for : (1) Congress committees in Village Committee areas, U. D. C. areas, Municipal ward areas, elected by primary members in those areas ; (2) Congress committees in State Council electoral areas elected by members of the committees mentioned above within those areas ; (3) The All-Ceylon Congress Committee elected by the State Council electoral committees ; (4) Working Committee of the Congress chosen by the President for year from the committees mentioned above ; (5) Primary members of Congress shall pay a minimum subcription of 25 cts. a year and that the Executive Committee by empowered to draft rules and regulations on the above lines.

Mr. L. M. Gooneratne seconded.

An amendment by Mr. D. A. Jayasinghe that the Working Committee should be elected by the executive was not supported, and the original resolution was put to the meeting and carried.

Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya moved the following resolution:

> That the Ceylon National Congress asks that the minimum demands for constitutional reforms by the Congress made at its Special Session held on the 4th March 1939 should be granted before the next General Election of the State Council.

He said they had experimented with the Donoughmore Constitution for eight years and had repeatedly conveyed the results of those experiments to the Governor as well as to the Secretary of State. The Governor still continued to use his special powers to violate public opinion and as long as these powers were vested in the Governor, the State Council would be unable to do very much for the country.

U. D. C.'s Power

On the other hand, local governing bodies like municipal councils. U. D. C.'s and even village committees had greater power than the State Council because they had complete control over their finances. Ministers of State had not the power to carry out the policies they set forth because their hands were tied in the matter of finance.

It might be possible that a fresh Council might be elected on the old Constitution but the resolution was steadfastly against such a step being taken. Congress must make an united stand that it would not accept any Constitution that fell short of its demands—in fact they must be prepared to boycott such a Constitution.

Mr. Victor C. Perera said that Mr. MacDonald, Major Attlee, the Labour leader, and other English statesmen, had over and over again declared that the war should not stand in the way of political, social, and economic reforms in the colonies. The reactionaries in Ceylon, however, had seized on the existence of the war as a pretext of post oning reforms.

There was no earthly reason, he said, why the Governor should delay his report. It was absurd to say that in peaceful Ceylon the Governor was so preoccupied with the war that he could not spare the time to compile his report, the material for which he had been collecting for nearly two years.

An Excuse

If it was the intention of the British Government to make the war an excuse for granting an extension of life to the present Council and to continue the present Constitution indefinitely, then Congress had only one course to adopt and that was non-co-operation.

Mr. Stanley de Zoysa proposed an amendment of the resolution by addition of the following rider: "which election shall not be postponed beyond the period provided for under the Constitution unless it be necessary for the purpose of inaugurating a Constitution which satisfies our demands."

Mr. de Zoysa explained that the amendment sought to bind Congress members in Council to resign their seats if the life of the State Council was prolonged for any other reason than that indicated. He appealed to Congress members of the Council to stand up and oppose the motion if they did not mean to implement it.

Mr. A. Rajasingham seconded.

The resolution and the amendment were unanimously adopted.

Before declaring the sessions closed the President announced that Mr. J. R. Jayawardene had donated Rs. 2,500 and Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya Rs. 1,000 to the Congress fund.[1]

The annual report was adopted and the Executive Committee for 1940 elected.

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1. The *CDN* correspondent reported this matter thus: "The proceedings concluded with an appeal by the President to members of primary committees to contribute to the One-Lakh Fund; fifty cents each from 2,000 members in the 50 electoral areas would realise the amount, he said. He also offered his own assistance and that of officers of the Congress in forming local associations."

E. Appendices to the Twenty-first Annual Sessions

(1) Ceylon Daily News Editorial, 28 December 1939: "The *Conference Season*"

The close of the year is a favoured time for political conferences In years gone by, this choice of season was even more pronounced than it is today. It is a question whether the holding of conferences during a traditionally festive season has an enervating effect on the movements with which they are concerned, but the sum total of their achievements has never been substantial. Speeches are made and resolutions passed, and little more of any account happens until it is once again a time to go through the same procedure. Something more than a smouldering interest in social, economic and political problems is, however, necessary if any organisation which claims a national allegiance is to live up to its professions. The President of the Ceylon National Congress was perhaps more candid than some of his predecessers when he said that "we have been somewhat lethargic and lukewarm." An excellent indicator of the interest displayed by members of the Congress, or any similar organisation in its ideals and policies is provided by the state of its finances. This again seems to disclose a serious and chronic ailment from which the Congress suffers.

There is little value in representative institutions, self-government and all the rest of it, until there is an abiding public interest in good government and the welfare of the people. The main purpose of political organisations is to stimulate such an interest. It is true that the creation of the State Council, with its system of government through Executive Committees, did much to undermine a virile and coherent public opinion in the country. Some change was always inevitable. Public opinion had something round which it could crystallise when the elected members merely formed an opposition to a purely bureaucratic government. But it was probably the elimination of a party system by the introduction of Executive Committees which immobilised

the legislature as an engine of public opinion. Members of the Council, for one reason or another, lose the capacity of giving any sort of lead to the public as soon as they get into Council. They are either afraid of antagonising some interested section of their constituents or are deeply committed to policies which deserve censure. On the other hand, these critics of the Council who behave as if they are under no obligation to educate and influence public opinion make themselves ridiculous when they exclaim that the country is going to the dogs. So long as they keep aloof and disdain the common touch, they are not entitled to sneer at people who take on a job of work, whether the nature of the work or the motives which prompt them. There is thus an important part which well-organised political organisations must play if the public life of the island is to be maintained at a desirable level and if democratic government is to be developed to the fullest advantage. It should be their aim to make a national appeal to all those who share common ideals and political aspirations, irrespective of race and religion.

The National Congress has of course an origin and heritage which still give it a claim to public consideration. It depends on those whom it can attract to its tabernacle, even more than the persons who have guarded the ark of the covenant these many years, whether the Congress will once again play an active and vigorous part in the public life of the country. Not so long ago some of its more prominent leaders rendered a disservice to the country by trying to secure the political extinction of those who opposed their particular aims and manoeuvres. The National Congress has taken a long time to outlive that deplorable phase in its career and its not altogether ill-deserved reputation as a caucus in the hands of a few. Whatever the future of the Congress may be, the need for organisations capable of educating public opinion were never more necessary than they are today.

(2) Newspaper Report on the Fourth Annual Conference of the Sama Samaja Party, 24 December 1939[1]

Imperialist War Condemned

The Sama Samaja Party Aims

" State Council has been Sabotaged "

A declaration aiming at the confiscation of all company-owned plantations and banks as the first task of a Workers' and Peasants' Government which it was hoped to establish with the rise of Socialism in Ceylon, was contained in one of the resolutions passed at the fourth annual conference of the Sama Samaja Party held at St. Paul's Girls School Hall, Park Avenue, Colombo, on Sunday.

The meeting which lasted from 9 a m till about 9 p.m, with intervals for lunch, tea, and an hour's dramatic entertainment, was attended by a large gathering, including a few women, both from the city and the outstations.

Dr. Colvin R. de Silva, the President of the Party, presided and the proceedings were conducted in Sinhalese and Tamil.

A Primary Tactic

Dr. de Silva began his address with a reference to the present war and its consequences. He said that Hitler had refused to be a British tool and not only declined an anti-Soviet adventure, but entered into a non-agression pact with the Soviet Union preparatory to a drive against Britain herself. The invasion of Poland was only the occasion for an Imperialist War the setting for which had then been already complete. It was a war for the re-distribution of colonies. It was developing into a world war and the holocaust would probably begin when it could also be general.

In those circumstances an anti-war drive must be a primary tactic in their struggle against imperialism. No self respecting colonial pepole could reasonably participate

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1. *CDN*, 27 December 1939.

in such a war. That was necessarily the case with Ceylon, too. The people of this country had been dragged, unconsulted, into a war of which they could not possibly approve. Besides, the weight of the attendant hardships of the war was being steadily shifted on to their shoulders in common with other colonial peoples. They could not but look with aversion upon a war whose objects were imperialist and whose immediate consequences had been to remove even the modicum of liberty and political power that they enjoyed and to undermine the already low standard of living to which imperialism had forced them.

The war, in fact, entailed a blackout of liberty more complete than that of light. Since the promulgation of the Defence Regulations and the introduction of the internal security scheme, only such political activity was lawfully possible as the authorities in their discretion might permit. The powers of the Police particularly in respect of arrest and search had been so extended as to permit of purely capricious exercise.

A Parallel Authority

While liberty had thus been undermined, the State Council had been sabotaged. The process actually began when an Order-in-Council transformed the Governor into a parallel legislative authority, vested with the power to legislate directly and independent of the State Council on all matters relating to "public order, public faith and the essentials of good government," and the Governor was really placed in a position readily to dispense with or override the State Council at any suitable moment. That point was now being rapidly reached. Only by voluntary subservience to the Governor's wishes could the State Council preserve even the appearance of independent power. The first real crisis would unveil the pretence.

The political power hitherto exercised by the people through representatives elected on an universal franchise had been effectively countered. The fade-out of the State

Council had not attracted the same attention as the black-out of liberty, perhaps because the one had been so subtly engineered, while the other had been so unavoidably obvious. The true meaning of the Governor's refurbished powers was little realised, especially as the State Council functioned as actively as ever, thoug one wondered whether the Starrup appointment would jolt even the unthinking into a realisation of the truth.

Discontented People

With regard to Ceylon's war budget, Dr. de Silva said that not only was their military expenditure swelling but it was also operating to curtail the social services, while a general rise in prices was increasing hardship, especially as wages remained stationary and employment had become restricted. Meanwhile, the middle classes were getting discontented with the sharp rise in the prices of things to which they were accustomed, while stationary wages and increasing unemployment in the face of rising prices were beginning also to stir the toiling masses into action. It was the last factor that would ultimately dominate the scene.

The Sama Samaja Party had, till now, carried out their object of stimulating the masses into thinking politically and familiarising them with the idea of Sama Samajism. That function had been more than performed. Now their work had to be directed to more concrete matters, like the building of trade unions and the organisation of struggles on day-to-day issues. Their movement was rapidly reaching the point when direct action and the consequent repression were necessary if there were to be any real general advance But they wanted mass action, not isolated Party action, in the future.

Concluding, Dr. Silva hoped that the time was not distant when the masses of India and Ceylon would commence the onslaught on Imperialism and so launch that struggle which would not end until power rested firmly and irrevocably in the hands of the Working Class.

Treasurer's Concern

Mr. Vernon Gunasekera, in presenting the report, referred to the formation of the All-Ceylon Plantation Workers' Union at Kandy, whose membership had now risen to 8,000.

Dr. N. M. Perera in presenting the Treasurer's statement of accounts, expressed concern at the paucity of regular paying members in the Party. Out of a potential membership subscription of nearly Rs. 3,000 they had received during the year Rs. 968.68 only. Could they continue as a Party with 75 per cent of the members as defaulters?

After the adoption of the report and accounts, number of resolutions were discussed and passed.

One of the resolutions called upon the masses of Ceylon to take their place with the colonial peoples in general and the masses of India in particular in opposing the war and preparing to play their proper part "in the coming colonial revolt for freedom from imperialism."

Plantation Workers

In another resolution the party demanded for plantation workers the immediate raising of the minimum wage by 33 per cent, the abolition of the discharge certificates and pence money, the abolition of the coupon system, and the introduction of schemes for pensions and unemployment insurance.

In a third resolution, the Party called upon the working classes to form Trade Unions to conduct struggles for an eight-hour day and wage increases in proportion to the rise in the cost of living.

In the last resolution, the Party called upon the rural masses directly to exercise their rights, granted to them by the State Council, to tap sweet toddy without a licence and unrestrictedly to graze their cattle on the roadside in rural areas.

Dr. De Silva was re-elected President of the Party for the ensuing year.

35. TWENTY-SECOND ANNUAL SESSIONS, 20-22 DECEMBER 1940

A. Preliminary Circular, 20 September 1940

Congress Office,
Borella Flats,
Borella,
20th September, 1940.

Presidents,
The Hony. Secretary,
Dear Friend,

The 21st [*sic*] annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress will be held at Mirigama on the 20th, 21st and 22nd December, 1940. It is proposed to open the Swadeshi Exhibition on the 20th December. The business part of the sessions will commence on Saturday the 21st and conclude on Sunday the 22nd December, 1940. Arrangements are being made for the delegates to spend Saturday night at Mirigama. Please enroll as many members as you can and inform them of the date of the sessions.

Delegates

Branch associations having over 100 members have the right to nominate 10 delegates to the sessions. Other associations have the right to nominate 5 delegates. All members of your association are also entitled to take part in the sessions. Please send the names of your delegates and the number of your members to us as early as possible.

President

Your association also has the right to nominate a President of the Congress for the coming year. Please send us a list of the names of persons in order of merit eligible for the Presidentship on or before the 20th October. Under the rules the names suggested after this date cannot be considered.

We shall send further details of our sessions in a subsequent communication.

Motions

Any primary member of the Congress party or a branch association has the right to give notice in writing of any resolution which they wish to propose at the annual sessions. These notices must reach us before the 20th November, 1940.

Your truly,

Dudley Senanayake,
J. R. Jayewardene,
Hony. Secretaries,
Ceylon National Congress.

B. PROGRAMME[1]

Friday, the 20th December:

5 p.m.—Opening of Swadeshi Exhibition Dress Reform Competition.

Saturday, the 21st December:

9 p.m.—Meeting of the Executive Committee.

2-3 p.m.—Presidential Procession and Historical Pageant —the 2nd Coronation of Parakrama Bahu the Great.

4 p.m.—Reception Committee Chairman's Address, Presidential Address.

(Exhibition Continues)

Sunday, the 22nd December:

9 a.m.—Business Sessions of the Congress Party Commences.

(Exhibition Continues)

Sessions Grounds—Opposite the Mirigama Railway Station.

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1. From C. N. A., 60/66. Both the programme and the list of resolutions that follows were printed in a bright yellow brochure which contained both Sinhalese and English versions.

C. Resolutions to be moved at the 22nd Sessions of the Congress Party[1]

1. The Ceylon National Congress considers it imperative that decisive steps should be taken to secure immediately for Ceylon such a political status as would ensure for the people of this country, the unfettered right to determine their domestic and foreign policies, and to frame their own Constitution.

2. This Sessions expresses its sympathy with the people of India in their struggle for freedom, and expresses its disapproval of the punishments imposed on India's sons and daughters, who are participating in a movement of great moral significance to the whole world, based as it is on the principle of non-violence.

3. The Ceylon National Congress demands the immediate introduction of legislation for the prohibition of immigration wherever foreign labour competes with Ceylonese labour in any trade or profession, and opposes any modification of the existing provisions of the law which provides for the grant of the status of citizenship to non-Ceylonese.

4. This Congress protests against the postponement of the General Elections beyond the statutory period without a sufficient guarantee that it is for the purpose of inaugurating satisfactory reforms and calls upon Congressmen in Council to resign their seats in pursuance of the resolution passed unanimously at the Kandy sessions.

5. This Sessions expresses its emphatic opinion that the Debt Conciliation Bill passed by the State Council but vetoed by the Secretary of State for the Colonies, should be made part of the law of the land and empowers the Congress Executive to take steps to further this object, and also strongly supports the proposal to enact a Land Redemption Ordinance.

1. C. N. A., 60/66.

Mr. D. S. Senanayake then delivered his address welcoming the gathering and extending his warm thanks to the gathering for the magnificient response to the Call of Congress.

The President-elect, Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, then delivered his presidential address.

This ended the first day's proceedings. The delegates were the guests of Mr. D. S. Senanayake at Botale Walauwa.

On Sunday the 22nd December, 1940, at 9 a.m. the business sessions of the Congress Party commenced with Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne in the chair.

The chairman on behalf of the Congress offered hearty thanks to all the known and unknown workers who had helped to make that event a great success.

Resolutions

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene moved the 6th resolution in the agenda. Mr. R. T. Kuruwita Gunasekera seconded.

Mr. L. M. Gooneratne moved an amendment to provide for All Ceylon Congress Committee instead of the Working Committee to be empowered to make any alterations. Mr. J. R. Jayawardene accepted the amendment and the resolution was passed.

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene moved the 7th resolution in the agenda. Mr. R. T. Kuruwita Gunasekere seconded.

Mr. Francis de Zoysa moved an amendment:

> That no person who is a member of an organisation which in the opinion of the Working Committee was a political organisation should be eligible for election to any office or committee in the Congress Party.

Mr. L. M. Gooneratne seconded. Mr. D. S. Senanayake moved a further amendment to the resolution:

> No person who is an office-bearer or committee member of an organisation which in the opinion of the Working Committee is an organisation whose activities are

hostile to the policy and programme of the Congress shall be eligible for election to any office or committee in the Congress Party.

Messrs. Geo. E. de Silva, H. W. Amarasuriya, Dudley Senanayake, J. R. Jayewardene and Dr. R. Saravanamuttu opposed Mr. D. S. Senanayake's amendment. Mr. D. S. Senanayake's amendment was put to the house and lost. Mr. Francis de Zoysa's amendment was carried by a large majority.

Dr. R. Saravanamuttu moved the 1st resolution in the agenda. Mr. Stanley de Zoysa seconded. Mr. P. Givendrasinghe supported. The resolution was carried.

Mr. Geo. E. de Silva moved the 2nd resolution in the agenda. Mr. W. Chas. L. Perera seconded. Mr. D. P. Senaratne supported. The resolution was carried.

Mr. D. Peter Perera moved the 5th resolution in the agenda. Mr. D. A. P. Kuruwita seconded. Carried unanimously. The Congress then adjourned for lunch.

On resumption after lunch, the adoption of the Annual Report which was printed and distributed to the delegates and the Statement of Accounts were unanimously adopted.

The election of the Executive Committee for 1941 then took place. [The minutes provide a list of the members elected. The list has been printed elsewhere].

Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa moved the 3rd resolution in the agenda. Mr. P. H. A. Silva seconded. Messrs. D. S. Senanayake and Dudley Senanayake supported. Carried unanimously.

Mr. N. Wickremaratne moved the 9th resolution in the agenda. Mr. W. R. Wijemanne seconded. The resolution was carried.

Mr. G. C. S. Corea moved the 10th and 11th resolutions in the agenda. Mr. H. E. P. de Mel seconded. Messrs. F. P. Senaratne, K. M. S. Gajadeera, N. Wickremaratne, and M. R. Candappa supported. The resolutions were carried unanimously.

Mr. C. P. G. Abeyewardena moved the 8th resolution in the agenda. Mr. W. D. S. Gauthamadasa seconded. Carried unanimously.

Mr. P. D. S. Jayasekera moved the 4th resolution in the agenda. Mr. U. M. Perera seconded. Mr. L. M. Gooneratne supported. The resolution was carried.

The business of the sessions having been concluded, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene proposed a hearty vote of thanks to Messrs. D. S. Senanayake, N. Wickremaratne, the Amaratunga brothers, the Reception Committee and the public of Mirigama for the arrangements made.

The vote was carried with loud acclamation.

Dudley Senanayake,
J. R. Jayewardene,
Hony. Secretaries.

E. Sri Lanka Nidahas Geethaya [1]

A Free Rendering

May this great movement—National Congress—live and prosper in this blessed Island of ours—Sri Lanka!

May it shape the policy of Lanka's people in terms of peace and non-violence!

May it attain the object of controlling the State for the benefit of its citizents in conformity with the principles of right and righteousness!

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1. From a leaflet, C. N. A., 60/104. It is noted that the song was composed by D. R. Jayawardene and W. A. de Silva.

Ye, sons and daughters of Lanka, rally round the banner of the Congress; for, this time, freedom can only be achieved through this national movement.

Cast off foreign domination and protect your beloved motherland. Raise this nation to heights of glory and prosperity and let each and everyone of its members share the riches and comforts in equal measure.

Sung by Mallika Perera and Chandrasoma Perera.

Accompanists: H. Don Vincent and

Leela Wickramaratchi.

F. Newspaper Report on the Swadeshi Exhibition,[1] 20 December 1940

Prelude To National Congress Sessions

Swadeshi Exhibition

Variations On Dress Theme

The venue of the Ceylon National Congress sessions at Mirigama presented a picturesque scene when a Swadeshi Exhibition was opened yesterday as a preliminary to the actual sessions to start today.

At the entrance to the grounds was a pandal and at the centre was a rostrum, constructed in the Polonnaruwa style of architecture in keeping with the pageant of the second crowning of Parakrama Bahu the Great which is to be demonstrated. Behind the rostrum were the exhibition stalls.

Encouragement Of Swadeshi

Mr. D. S. Senanayake, in inviting Mr. G. C. S. Corea the President of the Ceylon National Congress to declare the Exhibition open, said that it had been organised for the purpose of encouraging the production of swadeshi goods and of popularising them among the people so that th

[1]. *CDN*, 21 December 1940.

country might gradually become self-supporting. On behalf of the Congress he wished to thank all those who had co-operated in organising that Exhibition. He wished particularly to thank the government departments who had organised various sections. The Congress expected the government and the people to co-operate in producing and promoting swadeshi goods so that the goal they had in view, of producing in this country what they needed, might be expected.

Mr. Corea said that for twenty-one years the Congress had worked for the political progress of Ceylon and now for the first time it had organised a Swadeshi Exhibition. He was very glad that it had fallen to his lot to declare it open. In recent years with the obtaining of a certain measure of representative Government and with the hope of greater freedom in the future the Congress had been devoting its attention to the economic and social uplift of the people.

It had realised the need for the greater encouragement of swadeshi goods. He hoped that the people would take a great pride in producing swadeshi goods and feel a particular pleasure in patronising Ceylon-made or Ceylon-grown products in preference to the imported, even though the former might not have the same finish and polish as the imported articles. It was with the view of encouraging the producers to producing them and of the others to patronising them that they had organised that Exhibition. If th-y succeeded in that, the money that now went out of the country would circulate in the country itself. If they proceeded along those lines they would gradully develop their agriculture and industries and make Ceylon self-supporting.

Mr. Corea then declared the Exhibition open by cutting a ribbon that was drawn across the entrance.

Exhibition

The Exhibition was divided into four sections: Agricultural, Industrial, Ayurvedic Medicine, and Commercial. Articles from various parts of the island had

been sent in and there was keen competition for the prizes offered. All the exhibits were manufactured or produced in Ceylon, but those turned out with imported raw material were also included. Apart from the exhibits of private individuals, there were also stalls run by the different Co-operative Societies, the Agricultural Department, the Department of Commerce and Industries, the Marketing Department and the Medical Department.

The Agricultural Department also gave very interesting demonstrations in the preparation of food from such pulses as dhal and "cambu" grown in Ceylon; chillies cured in Ceylon and other products on which quotas had been placed also proved of great interest because of the demonstrations.

Industries

In the Industries Section there were demonstrations of weaving cloth, coir mat-weaving and pottery-making according to the improved methods. The weaving of the famous Dumbara mats—not by men from the hills, but by some Kinnera people, who had settled down in Mirigama and were spreading the art—was also demonstrated.

Among the interesting exhibits of new local enterprises were shown an excellent array of toys as good as those imported from Japan, a collection of pipes, cigar-holders and cigeratte-holders made out of sandalwood and also small packets of kitul jaggery attractively packed.

In the Ayurvedic Section was a collection of rare medicinal herbs and also surgical instruments turned out by local craftsmen.

Dress Parade

A dress parade in connection with the Dress Reform Competition was also held yesterday afternoon and proved a very entertaining item. Ten competitors mounted the rostrum to enable the judges to select the winner. All the competitors wore various styles of what is known as the

"national dress." Some of the adaptations were meant fo greater utility or the greater practicability of the dres: Two of the competitors also delivered brief addresse stressing the features in their costumes, one of then remarking that he had copied his attire from a granit statue. Another remarked that he had not a leather ban for his hat because the ancient Sinhalese had a prejudic against leather. Yet another demonstrated how he coul play football or hockey by folding a part of his cloth. I spite of these variations there seemed to be a genera unanimity among the competitors that the cloth was th most suitable nether garment. The differences arose wit regard to the upper garment.

Winner

The judges had a difficult task and ultimately selected Mr. Dennis Jayasena as the winner and handed him the prize. He wore a cloth and a shirt in the form of a tunic falling just above the knees. The "tails" of the shirt were elegantly stitched up wih pockets on either side. The shirt was taken in at the waist so as to give it a comfortable fit.

The judges were of opinion that it was a good dress for the middle-class man and one which even the poor man could wear without much expense. The judges of the competition were: Mr. G. C. S. Corea, Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya, Dr. R. Saravanamuttu, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene and Mr. M. D. A. Wijesinghe.

G. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne's Presidential Address[1]

Brothers and sisters, workers in a common cause! When six short years ago you elevated me to the high office and dignity which it has been my privilege once again to receive at your hands today, I could not believe that our

1. The address is contained in a Sinhala pamphlet among the CNC documents presented to the Archives; see C.N.A., 60/105; I have been saved the trouble of translating this pamphlet by the discovery of a typescript of the address, in English, among the Wijeyeratne MSS; see C. N. A., 25. 20/10.

dream of an active, powerful and resurgent Congress would be realised as soon. It would be ungracious of me if I do not publicly announce that the main factor in the successful year of activity which we have just gone through has been the untiring enthusiasm of the two Secretaries and the calm and balanced guidance of the retiring President. It is but fitting that a twelve months' record of such activity should culminate in this wonderful gathering at which we are now present. On behalf of all the delegates present here and in the name of the Congress I wish to express our tribute to the Chairman of the Reception Committee and to his colleagues not only for the presence, on this occasion, of such a concourse of people, but also to the attention paid to every detail to make this sessions a memorable one. The Congress has reached its manhood and after twenty-one years of struggle, of fluctuating disappointment and success we have been treated by our rural brethren to this magnificent reception. We shall endeavour, in the course of the coming year of our activities, to remember the significance of this gathering and to devote our best energies to work in rural areas, to study the problem of village life more seriously and to make the Congress a living force in the island through its close and lasting contact with its rural branches throughout Ceylon.

The complaint has often been made, not without justice, that the Congress has not yet engaged itself in any practical work either for the benefit of the labourer or the peasant; that we have always kept in the foefront a political programme only, and that we have been engaged mainly in an effort to obtain political freedom. We must admit that an organisation like this, worthy of its name, should have devoted more of its energies and its endeavours in carrying out some practical schemes for the economic benefit of our less favoured brethren. We are definitely resolved to remedy this defect in the coming year and through the rural branches which we are now creating we shall render practical assistance in actual personal service, in the industrial and agricultural development of the community.

But before I deal with this aspect of the question let us pause for a moment to examine the work in which the Congress was engaged throughout the year which is closing now. The report that has just been read by the Secretaries will show you how enthusiastically the various committees have been functioning during the period. There are three incidents of major importance to which I wish to make the passing reference. One of these has been referred to at length by the Chairman of the Reception Committee.[1] The question of an honourable adjustment of our present strained relations with India in the economic sphere is one that has engaged the attention of the Hon'ble Mr. D. S. Senanayake for many years. The failure of the preliminary discussions should not discourage us but should all the more be regarded as an incentive to explore a possible basis for settlement between the two countries. I propose in the course of my remarks to deal a little more fully with the somewhat acrimonious dispute that has arisen on the question of immigration.

Another and even more important incident has been referred to in the report as a ministerial crisis. You are all familiar with the events of February last. It was indeed a testing period not only to the Ministers and Members of the Council, but to all lovers of constitutional freedom. An obstinate official refused to carry out the orders of a responsible Minister and when that refusal was supported by the highest official in the land we felt that unless strong action was taken immediately no effective control could any longer be claimed by any Minister over departments entrusted to him. The Working Committee of the Congress took prompt action and requested the Ministers and the elected representatives to withdraw from further partici-pation in the government of the country until the threatened inroad to the powers assigned to the Ministers under the Constitution was withdrawn. It was a most heartening sight to watch the vast concourse, in fact the largest within living memory, which gathered together to demand the withdrawal of this threat and the restoration of these powers. The

1. See *infra*, pp. 1401 ff. particularly item I.

sovreignty of the people thus asserted itself. The resignation of the Ministers and the subsequent withdrawal of the interpretation given by the Governor are matters of recent history. Whilst the events of these few days indicate in no unmistakeable manner the power of united action on the part of the people of this country I must not deny to His Excellency the Governor a just tribute for his statesmanlike resolve to restore public confidence. To bow to public opinion and to satisfy public anxiety, to withdraw an order already made, once it was found that the order was unacceptable to the people—these required statesmanship and courage of a high order and Sir Andrew Caldecott has shown us in this instance that even an impossible Constitution such as ours can be worked with tact and conciliation.

The entry of the National Congress as a party in elections has been a subject of much controversy for several years. Grave misunderstandings were expressed at all previous discussions that there was not sufficient cohesion in our ranks and that the loyalty of individual members might not prove strong during the testing time of an electioneering campaign. We have however made a beginning with the municipal elections of Colombo. The results have been beyond the wildest expectations of our critics, although those of us like Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya, whose faith in the Congress participation in elections never wavered, had always felt that success would crown such an effort. We have gained valuable experience of working as a party; the propaganda value for Congress has been enormous and the Municipal Council pledged to carry out a policy and programme prepared by us for the greater benefit of the city, will I believe remain as an outstanding triumph of Congress activities in the present year.

I do not wish to conclude my remarks on the municipal elections without making a reference to the prevalence of a vicious and corrupt practice which was brought to light in several of the polling centres. I refer to the many cases of impersonation. The press has rendered a distinct service in making special reference to this most undesir

in election contests and no words are too strong to condemn this evil. It shall be our endeavour in the course of the coming year to devise effective means to check the growth of this evil and to secure the passage of legislation to deal with similar transgressions in the future. A comprehensive resolution was placed this morning before the Congress Executive by one of the delegates and it has been decided to include it in the agenda at the very first meeting of the Committee next month.

I hope and trust that we shall be able, with the co-operation of everybody concerned, to provide for cleaner municipal elections in the future.

There is one other matter I wish to refer to. It has been our melancholy duty to record from time to time the passing away of these early pioneers who had worked unceasingly to build up the edifice of the Congress on a sure foundation. Amongst those whose loss we have moaned [*sic*] there is none whose services to the Congress and the country have been more loyal or more selfless than the late Mr. E. J. Samerawickrame. Retiring in his ways, modest and unassuming, nevertheless, a man with a massive intellect, Mr. Samerawickrame rendered for many years a unique service in guiding the deliberations of the Congress. Even when his voice failed him and when he was compelled to retire into private life, he nevertheless continued to take an abiding interest in us and to place his valuable advice for the benefit of our leaders. With him we moaned [*sic*] the passing away of another earlier stalwart —Mr. H. A. P. Sandrasagara. Mr. Sandrasagara was a member of the deputation which went on behalf of the Congress to interview the Secretary of State in the year 1920. He was always a welcome figure on a Congress platform and his sonorous eloquence and his skill in debate helped to enliven the proceedings at the annual sessions. I ask all of you to stand up and pay our tribute of respect to these two and to those others whose names are perhaps not so well known but who nevertheless had rendered service to the Congress and who have died since we met at the last sessions.

Ladies and gentlemen, you will see from the resolutions before you that we have taken upon ourselves the responsibility to carry out a very wide programme of work in the coming year. I should like to lay special emphasis on two aspects of our proposed activities—the political and the economic. In dealing with the former may I draw your attention to the first resolution on the agenda.

"The Ceylon National Congress considers it imperative decisive steps should be taken to secure immediately for Ceylon such a political status as would ensure for the people of this country the unfettered right to determine their domestic and foreign policies and to frame their own Constitution."

Time was when the word freedom was uttered with bated breath, when the highest ideal of responsible associations of this country was to obtain some little measure of representative government. The evolution from this stage to the stage of responsible government was due entirely to the ceaseless efforts of the Congress.[1] We then placed before us the ultimate goal of Dominion Status—but all the time we were content to move by slow degrees, tinkering with the present Constitution, removing some objectionable feature here or introducing a more democratic form at another place. Even at the sessions held on the [illegible]th of March, 1939, we were content to work the existing Constitution provided certain repugnant features were done away with such as, for instance, the removal of the Officers of State and the curtailment of the Governor's powers.

Since then world conditions have changed [illegible] entered upon yet another [illegible] great war has hardly [illegible] gain either to the victor or [illegible] has emerged from [illegible] a mightier war. [illegible] nations warring [illegible] ruthlessly destroying [illegible]

[1] [illegible]

it has taken centuries of blood and tears and the noblest of human endeavour to build up. Christian nations have forgotten the Christ. They have forgotten His message "The meek shall inherit the land." Even nations who claimed to owe allegiance to the doctrine of maithriya preached by the greatest of Aryans have been dazzled by the greed and lust for power. Today millions of men and countless millions of money are being sacrificed to establish a new world order—of force and imperial ambition. Japan in her mad career of conquest is forcing her way into the midst of a harmless peace-loving people in the neighbouring continent. Italy cradled under the very shadow of St. Peter has carried war and slaughter into the homes of an ancient people in Africa. What is England doing? Engaged though she is in the greatest struggle in her history, for her very existence, she still remains blind. She is blind to the need for establishing a commonwealth broad-based on the fellowship of free people. Her statesmen in their blindness fail to see the writing on the wall. India in her struggle for freedom, India's sons and daughters, who are participating in a movement of the greatest moral significance to the whole world, will assuredly break away from their allegiance, which to them is but a burden and an incubus unless they are given the right to determine the form of government best suited to their needs.

To us too, the call has come and we too must be resolved, whatever may be the trial and whatever the difficulties and however hard the struggle, to frame our own Constitution and to exercise the right to determine our own policy whether domestic or foreign. Let us have the light of faith that the end of the war will usher in the new order when exploitation shall cease and when the subject peoples throughout the world will enjoy the blessing of complete freedom unhampered by outside control. I trust that the resolution I have just referred to will command itself to every shade of opinion within and even outside the Congress,[1] for the political status such as the one envisaged by

1. The rest of this sentence has been crossed-out.

the resolution is enjoyed by every self-governing dominion of the British Empire coming within the Statute of Westminster.

A discussion of our political future brings us face to face with a problem of equal importance—the possibility of an alliance with free India. The Chairman of the Reception Committee has referred to our ancient culture which owes its genesis to the culture of Aryan India, and the historical affinities between the peoples of the two countries. Quite apart from the cultural ties that bind the two countries together, the question of a political union has now advanced to the stage of a practical problem. A free India, whether she remains within the commonwealth of the British Empire as a self-governing dominion or whether she completely severs her connection with England as Ireland has done, will find in us a most valuable ally by reason of the safety of our harbours. Her thousands of miles of sea-front will find in them all the protection she needs. A strong navy, built and installed within these natural harbours which we so abundantly possess, will raise her high among the great nations of the world. For our own part it is not too far-fetched to visualise a future when statesmen in England may outlive the idea of Enpire and may decide to adopt the principle which America has proposed to adopt in the case of the Philippines—to allow each unit of this unwieldy and far-flung Empire to begin an independent existence.

Looking at the problem from a more practical angle, it is also quite easy to visualise a future confederation of India, Burma, and Ceylon, all three forming independent units of one great self-governing dominion. I mentioned Burma advisedly because our contact with that country during the last 300 years has been warm and cordial. There are the ties of a common religion between the people of Burma and the majority of the inhabitants of this country. Burma too has within recent years given unmistakable signs of her determination to break away from imperial domination. In the event of such an alliance we too can gain by India's strength, her inexhaustible man-power. She

ındoubtedly be one of the greatest if not the most
ıount industrial nations of the world. Friendship
ıen the two countries, a better understanding and
athy, are necessary for the future of both, perhaps
necessary for us than even for India. Whilst therefore
:el unhappy at the failure of our delegates to bring
endeavours to fruition, I have no doubt that every
e will be explored to adjust our differences. The
ım is entirely economic and *must surely be capable*
ı honourable solution. The Congress expects the
ters to take action without further delay to deal with
ıestion of immigration. This they can do on the same
ıs India herself has done. The Foreigners Act of 1939
dras, the rules framed for the enlistment of the air
in India, the protective legislation passed in Mysore
ı Bihar, all described in detail by the Hon. Mr. Sena-
e, are measures intended to save the nationals of each
ry from unfair foreign competition. Therefore there
. be no objection to introduce legislation to control
ration to Ceylon. This is a subject, which, according
peculiar Constitution obtaining in this country,
s to both the Minister of Labour, Industry and
erce as well as to a state officer, the Chief Secretary.
ınot understand why this issue has not been faced
now. The State Council has passed more than one
ion authorising the Ministers to introduce the neces-
gislation, and I have no doubt that responsible public
ı in India can have no serious objection to such a
e of self-protection. That such protection has become
tive everyone here is agreed. Our figures of unem-
ınt are steadily amounting. Our population is increas-
about 100,000 annually. There are over 200,000 Indians
ed in Ceylon apart from the 600,000 labourers work-
tea and rubber estates. In Colombo City alone,
ng to the latest reports, the unemployed number
We have had to introduce a scheme, very nearly the
ent of the dole, and millions of rupees have been
n *unemployment* relief. Immediate steps taken to
immigration will solve one of the two branches of
ıomic problem I have referred to above.

This brings me to the question of the large Indian population already in the island. As you are aware they number 900,000. In their case the issue is not only economic but also political. We have to consider how many of these form the permanent population and how many are mere sojourners. It has never been suggested by any responsible public man in this country that the 600,000 men and women employed on the plantations should be bundled out with a mere stroke of the pen. There is no possible way of replacing immediately these vast numbers, even to any appreciable extent, with local labour, nor are we so foolhardy as to attempt to strike at the very foundations of valuable industries such as tea and rubber which it has taken several decades of effort and vast expenditure of money to build up. We can nevertheless conceive of a future when with restricted immigration of estate labour and with the larger entry of the villager to this type of work, the problem will solve itself in a normal way.

There yet remain about 200,000 Indians engaged in occupations in urban areas. When there is sufficient work to go round, the problem will not be so acute, even though unfair competition may tend to lower the standard of living and reduce the wages. But in times of acute distress, when work is little and workers too many we should surely have the right to send away the foreign casual worker just as we now exercise the right of repatriating the destitute.

But the real difficulty is the political issue involved in connection with the 900,000 Indians now living in this country. It is not necessary for me to repeat the arguments so admirably advanced by the Chairman of the Reception Committee. It is however important to remember that the present Constitution would surely have been rejected in the Legislative Council had it not been for the assurance given by the authorities both here and in Downing Street that the exercise of the franchise would be granted only to two classes of people—the permanent inhabitants of this country and to those who can be regarded as permanently settled in the island. A solemn promise given b Sir He rt Stanley that domicile should be made the t

of names in the electoral lists was equally solemnly confirmed by Lord Passfield, the then Secretary of State. The fact that this undertaking has been ignored, either through inadvertence, or the carelessness of the registering officers, or through design, is no justification for refusing to right the wrong even now. During my year of office as President in 1935, I in company with the Hon'ble Mr. Senanayake discussed the question at length with the then Legal Secretary and I am aware that the authorities at that time accepted the correctness of the position we urged and were prepared to order the revision of the registers so as to bring them in conformity with the existing requirements of the law.

The right claimed by the Indians to exercise the franchise is not only a political but also an economic issue and we cannot allow the economic future of the country to be decided by such representatives in the legislature whose electors possess no abiding interest in this country. The time at my disposal does not permit me to discuss in detail this most important problem, but the Congress shall immediately appoint a sub-committee to take all such steps as will become necessary to support the action of the delegation and the proposals that the Board of Ministers will submit for decision by the legislature.

I wish to make a brief reference to resolution No. (8) which is on the agenda paper. The State Council has already decided that some part of our public business should be conducted through the media of the mother tongue. But I take it that the proposer will have something to say with regard to the uselessness of passing resolutions of this type unless they are implemented by such other steps as must proceed the use of the mother tongue as the state language. Before the business of the courts, of general administration, of commercial establishments, of engineering and other technical institutes can be conducted in the mother tongue, it is necessary that the two main languages should be made capable of imparting instruction in all commercial and technical matters. Unless this is done as a condition precedent, no amount of pious resolutions will

enable us to give effect to the decision of the Council. The Congress will submit proposals for a five year or even a ten year scheme during which period several responsible committees appointed by government will have to be engaged in translating into the languages of the country the treatises now written in English and through which instruction has up to now been imparted. Whilst on this subject let us not lose sight of the fact that over Rs. 20,000,000 are spent annually on education. Whilst no reasonable man will grudge the expenditure of this amount, or even larger sums of money under the head of education, it is essential that the youth of the country turned out of our schools should be equipped to seek, successfully, careers in the agricultural and industrial life of the community.

As I stated earlier in the course of my remarks there are two aspects which I am anxious to emphasise—the political and the economic. I trust I have made sufficiently clear the former. I propose now to address you regarding the latter.

If we of the Congress are engaged in this ceaseless struggle for political freedom, believe me, the effort will not be worthy of its name unless we find, participating in that freedom and enjoying the practical benefits of that freedom, every man and woman who can call this country his or her own. We shall never be parties to any transference of power from a foreign oligarchy to one of our own. Whether they be the princes of old or the old feudal aristocracy, or whether they be modern magnates of industry, or capitalistic combines, their methods bear the texture of the same pattern, their activities are necessarily predatory in character, and must result ultimately in economic inequality. We make this promise to you on behalf of the Ceylon National Congress and we proclaim this as an article of our creed that we shall endeavour to transfer any power that we may gain to the rich and the poor alike, so that all of us may fashion our lives and fortunes freed from injustice and exploitation. In the evolution of our future society, we m to at

there shall no longer be the domination of any one class over another. To the labourer it should not be merely a question of wages or charity, doled out by any employer or a landlord. Today the abundance that the land produces or the income earned by industry is not for the peasant or the labourer. In the words of the Great Apostle of Indian freedom—Jawaharlal Nehru—"however golden the harvests and heavy the dividends, the mud-huts and hovels and nakedness of our people testify to the glory of the Empire and our present social system."

I have a special message to the workers in the cities and particularly in the city of Colombo. Hitherto they had worked under the banner of various labour organisations. Our contact with them has up to now been very little. In the course of our recent Municipal electioneering campaigns we have been able to explain to them what great advantages could be secured by them through Municipal institutions. The Congress party in the Municipal Council has agreed to help the establishment of industrial, commercial and technical schools for the benefit of the children of the poor 'bona fide' residents of the city, so that they may take their proper place in trade and business. Long-term works, such as improvements and rebuilding schemes, slum clearance, planned expansion and development of the city, greater attention to sanitation, the provision of community centres—all these will be items in their programme of work. Above all the very serious and acute problem of providing houses for the poor will be tackled at the earliest possible opportunity. Our party members are already working out the details of a plan to build 5,000 tenements in various parts of the city or in its immediate neighbourhood.

What can be done in Colombo city can be done with even greater success in the smaller towns in this island. But to be able to carry out any programme of progressive work we must continue our contact with the less fortunate dwellers in the cities. Here I wish to strike a note of warning. It has been brought to our notice that attempts were made during the recent elections to create distrust in the minds

of the workers towards the activities of the Congress. True service to labour can be done by any honest organisation. There is no special magic in a label, and as has been conclusively proved in the present elections, the various labour organisations alone cannot claim the monopoly to represent the interests of the labour classes or to speak on their behalf.

We are discussing at this sessions the appointment of a Planning Commission to help the future of working classes in Ceylon. The resolution will be handled by one who has devoted several years to the earnest study of this problem and I am sure that the Hon'ble Mr. Corea will explain in detail how far the Congress, through its branch organisations, can assist in improving the conditions of labour. We propose to establish at least a few rural centres so that in times of distress, of epidemics, or floods, we shall be with the sufferers to render them personal service. At other times we can work through these given centres and help to relieve the acute problem of unemployment by assisting in the development of useful industries.

I fear it is too late to lament the passing away of the heritage of land from its legitimate owners. Those Indians who own large extents of land both in the Kandyan country as well as in the sea-board districts, the absentee European capitalists who possess the best and most fertile areas of this island, as well as our own absentee landlords who possess large estates—all these are the result of a capitalist state of society. This problem can be solved only in one way and the Minister of Agriculture has had the vision and the foresight to realise it when he successfully piloted the Land Bill in the State Council. There you have the true beginnings of the socialist system. The problem of the landless can be solved even in areas where crown lands are no longer available. There is provision in the Ordinance for [illegible] acquisition of any land belonging [illegible] to settle the landless on those lands. In [illegible] two fairly extensive rubber [illegible]

from capitalist companies by government. These areas have since been divided into economic holdings and a number of poorer families have been settled on them.

To me the greatest problem we have to face in this country is the problem of the landless. The expropriation of the land belonging to the peasantry, the various devices adopted to give the most fertile of our plains to British capitalists, the open hostility with which private claims to undeveloped lands was regarded by government, the various Land Ordinances commencing from 1840 which have disgraced the statute books—all these undoubtedly form the blackest page in the history of the British connection.

It is our special fortune that at this time of a re-awakened national consciousness, the future land policy in this country is in the hands of the one man who has the courage and the capacity to give it a new orientation. In the main, the economic future of Ceylon and its people depends on the successful handling of the land problem and no expense should be considered too high and no hardship too great in the attempt to solve that problem. A special sub-committee of the Congress will work in close co-operation with the Minister of Agriculture to find settlement for the landless and thereafter [to] assist in the development of these settlements.

It is in this branch of activities and as well as in fostering the growth of the small, and particularly, of cottage, industries, that the Congress will need the help of a band of enthusiastic women workers. In addressing our sisters present here today, chiefly those who have come from Colombo and other outstations, I wish to address the women of Ceylon. I wish to appeal to them to join the ranks of Congress, to make common cause with us, to form their own committees and to carry the valued gift of their personal service to the homes of the poor in the distant villages. With their help Congress will be able to establish not few but several centres of rural reconstruction where opportunities will be found for selfless social service.

Ladies and gentlemen, I shall not detain you much longer. We are resolved that from now onwards Congress must cease to be an organisation which indulged in mere talks. It will henceforth be a body that will work. It will take part, as far as it is possible, in every agricultural, industrial, and economic activity in which our people will be engaged. No organisation can however succeed in the high purpose it has placed before it unless it settles down to hard practical work and unless it has magnetic influence of mass support. We must therefore seek to be a mass organisation. During the coming year we intend, whilst forming our branches in village and urban areas and by spreading our propaganda through these organisations, to attract to our side and to our ideals the largest possible number of our country's inhabitants. We must be clear in our mind that this allegiance must be to the party and its ideals and not to any individuals however powerful they may be. Once this is done we can erase the word "struggle" in our path for freedom. For, has it not been said of old that "there can be no slavery when there is the will and the strength to be free."

At this the twenty-first [sic] sessions of our Congress, on this day when we have attained our manhood, we are placing before the sessions a resolution which, if accepted, takes this country and our ancient people—so far as our political goal is concerned—further than they have ever gone during nearly a century and a half of British rule. I ask you, the men and women, the peasants and the labourers, those who are present in your thousands, aye through you and beyond you, the yet more several thousands of the sons and daughters of our common motherland, to join us and help us to mould the future structure of a prosperous and free Lanka.

The way may be long, the path difficult, and progress slow; but of this at least we are certain, that we know the goal towards which we travel. You can all work with us. None is so poor that we shall despise his help. None is so rich or so great that can despise us in turn. To the youth of my country I wish to say this. You have for many years kept away from us the purer flame of your hi ideals.

Perhaps you had an excuse. To you our goal was not clear. We were halting too much by the wayside. It may be that you were justified in your aloofness. That excuse will no longer avail you now, for we have made common cause with you, and with you we shall wrest the right—the freedom to shape our destiny. To you who are socialists, who dream of a future, purer than any past has ever been, you who want to end this social structure which enables a few to enjoy the luxuries bought with the blood and the tears of the many who starve, I ask you to come with us. Let us all, sons and daughters of Lanka, rally under the banner of Congress and together plan our future life, the life of the contented and the free.

H. Newspaper Report on the Sessions[1]

Pageantry of 21st [*sic*] Congress Session
Mirigama Thronged by Vast Crowds
President Conducted in Mile-Long Procession

The 21st [*sic*] annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress opened here today at 5 P.m. amidst unexampled scenes of national demonstrations and in the presence of a large gathering of Congressmen, visitors and a teeming crowd of villagers.

Staged in a pleasing rural setting the formal inauguration f the sessions took place in the open air in the cool shade f coconut trees.

The President-elect, Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, arrived on the Congress grounds conducted in a procession from the Mirigama Resthouse, a mile away. He rode under a white ceremonial umbrella in an open decorated cart drawn by a pair of big white bulls.

[1] *Ceylon Observer*, 22 December 1940. It is probable that this was a report supplied by officials of the Congress, but there are no draft reports among the documents for the years 1940-42.

On arrival at the Makara Thorana which spanned the entrance to the sessions grounds he was received and garlanded by Mr. D. S. Senanayake, Chairman of the Reception Committee.

Historical Pageant

From here the President-elect was conducted on foot through a lane between surging crowds preceded by a party of college youths forming a historical pageant depicting Parakrama Bahu the Great after his second crowning as Lord of All Lanka.

A tremendous ovation was given to Mr. Wijeyeratne as he mounted the rostrum, aptly designed in the Polonnaruwa style, which stood dominating the centre of the grounds.

The scene all round by this time presented a sea of heads, representing a crowd of 15,000 or more.

Improvised seats arranged in terraces over the sloping ground around the rostrum accommodated a large part of the crowd.

Amusing Incident

An amusing incident occurred just as the great crowd was settling down for the commencement of the proceedings. The loud drone of approaching aeroplanes was heard and all eyes eagerly turned skyward, many wondering whether the resourceful organizers had arranged a surprise packet.

Presently they were met with the sight of a formation of three aeroplanes flying past directly over the Congress grounds to somewhere in Ceylon and the crowd burst into resounding cheers. When the aeroplanes disappeared the proceedings of the Congress sessions were initiated with the singing of the national song by a bevy of girls.

Mr. Senanayake's Joke

Mr. D. S. Senanayake, Chairman of the Reception Committee, then delivered his address welcoming the gathering. Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne's presidential address followed.

The afternoon's proceedings ended with Mr. Senanayake extending his warm thanks to the gathering for the magnificent response to the call of Congress. He jocularly remarked: "If I am sometimes proud of being called "Kalay John," it is because I am proud of Mirigama Korale."

From an early hour in the afternoon the Congress grounds reverberated with the throb of drums and national music and villagers from far and near poured in in great numbers. A spirit of spontaneous festivity was abroad and Mirigama town was on fete for the occasion with the whole bazaar quarter ablaze with decorations.

The concourse on the Congress grounds swelled every minute, many arriving after a trek from villages many miles away.

As the afternoon wore on the arrival of the presidential procession was eagerly awaited by the large crowds meantime thronging the splendid Swadeshi Exhibition.

Mile-Long Procession

The presidential procession, which arrived at about 5 p.m. surpassed all expectations. It consisted of processional groups from five different villages which had met at Kandalama, aobut two miles away, and wended its way to the Congress grounds picking up the president-elect at the Resthouse.

Over a dozen elephants were in the procession which extended for over a mile in length and consisted of all the usual characteristic features. The historical pageant which was enacted by the St. Joseph's College Sinhalese Society formed part of the procession and presented a dazzling spectacle.

With the grounds illuminated, the Swadeshi Exhibition remained open till late in the night.

The day's events proved a triumph of organisation for the Secretaries, Messrs. J. R. Jayewardene and Dudley Senanayake.

Mr. Senanayake's Plans for Future

Certain plans which Mr. D. S. Senanayake, Minister of Agriculture and Lands, cherishes for the advancement of the people of Ceylon were revealed by him in his address as Chairman of the Reception Committee.

After welcoming the delegates and members of the public Mr. Senanayake said that as Minister of Agriculture and Lands during the last ten years he had had to grapple with many problems affecting the social and economic life of the people of Ceylon and had come into close personal touch with their daily life.

"It is, therefore, in the spirit of placing at your service the fruits of my ten years of labour in the national cause that I earnestly ask you think over the ideas which I have formed and, if you agree with them, to do everything in your power to bring them to fruition for the sake of the national welfare and happiness," said Mr. Senanayake.

Social Services

Dealing first with the problem of social services, Mr. Senanayake remarked that one of the gravest defects of the present political organisation of Ceylon was the very limited scope given to the activities of local bodies.

One of the conspicuously characteristic features of all schemes prepared by the central government was the absence of that personal touch and understanding of the people and their needs which was necessary for efficient and successful administration, observed Mr. Senanayake.

Passing on to the economic development of the people he felt very strongly that one of the greatest needs of today was debt conciliation.

The Banking Commission had found that of 1,100,000 acres of coconut land, as much as 500,000 had passed into the hands of Chett ar money lenders. Of the balance 600,000 acres 75 per cent was under mortgage at rates of interests far in excess of the income which the lands could give. This

that as a result of the depression either the land owner had lost his land altogether or he was working his land for the benefit of his creditors. The result was detrimental to the country's interests.

Undivided Ownership

Mr. Senanayake outlined his plan for remedying the evils which attended the undivided ownership of land by a large number of persons, each of whom had a fractional share. He said that it was necessary to enforce a scheme for the consolidation of holdings and to introduce the system of registration of titles to take the place of the present system of registration of deeds.

Dealing with the question of education, Mr. Senanayake said that he had in mind an educational system in which rural reconstruction, adult education, vocational education, and instruction in agricultural and health matters would form an essential part.

Primary Education

Primary education, he thought, should be in the hands of religious organisations. At an early age it was essential that religion should constitute an important part of the child's education. At the age of 14 the future career of the boy should be decided on and his education thereafter directed towards fitting him for that career. More attention should be paid to vocational education, the importance of which cannot be over emphasised, added Mr. Senanayake.

(Mr. Senanayake's remarks on the Indo-Ceylon talks appear elsewhere)

Mr. Wijeyeratne's Presidential Address

Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, in the course of his presidential address, said "To me the greatest problem we have to face in this country is the problem of the landless. It is our special fortune that at this time of reawakened national consciousness the future land policy of this country is in the hands of the one man who has the courage and the capacity to give it a new orientation."

Mr. Wijeyeratne began by paying a tribute to the retiring President and Secretaries and thanking the Reception Committee and its chairman. The Congress had reached its manhood after twenty-one years of struggle and fluctuating fortunes and the magnificent rural reception was very significant.

Congress would devote their best energies to work in rural areas, study the problem of village life more seriously and make close and lasting contact with the rural branches throughout Ceylon.

Congress......was determined in the future to render practical assistance in actual personal service in the industrial and agricultural development of the community.

Dealing with the work of Congress in the past year Mr. Wijeyeratne referred to incidents "of major importance." He referred to the question of a settlement of the present "strained relations" with India in the economic sphere. "The failure of the preliminary discussions should not discourage us but should be regarded as an incentive to explore a possible basis for settlement between the two countries."

February Crisis

He also referred to the ministerial crisis of February last when the Ministers resigned over a constitutional issue and paid a tribute to the Governor for his statesmanlike final handling of the situation.

Dealing with the running of the Congress on genuine party lines the President claimed that a beginning had been made with the municipal elections of Colombo. Congress had gained valuable experience of working as a party and there were no less than nine Congressmen in the Municipal Council pledged to carry out a prepared policy. He also dealt with the evil of widespread [illegible] elections.

The Press had rendered a service by making special reference to this undesirable feature in election contests.

The President at this stage paid a tribute to the memory of the late Mr. E. J. Samerawickrame and Mr. H. A. P. Sandrasagara.

Problem Entirely Economic

Commenting on the resolutions that would come before Congress, he said that it was easy to visualise a future confederation of India, Burma and Ceylon. Whatever problem there was, was entirely economic. Control of immigration to Ceylon must be introduced as the figures of unemployment were steadily rising.

In connection with the 900,000 Indians now living in the country the real difficulty was political. "The present Constitution would surely have been rejected in the Legislative Council had it not been for the assurance given by the authorities both here and in Downing Street that the exercise of the franchise would be granted only to two classes of people—the permanent inhabitants of the country and those who can be regarded as permanently settled in the Island."

In conclusion Mr. Wijeyeratne said that henceforth Congress must cease to be an organisation which indulges in mere talk, and be a body that would work. "It will take part, as far as it is possible, in every agricultural, industrial and economic activity in which our people will be engaged. No organisation can however succeed in the high purpose it has placed before it unless it settles down to hard practical work and unless it has the magnetic influence of mass support. We must therefore seek to be a mass organisation."

I. Newspaper Report[1] on an aspect of Mr. Senanayake's Speech at the Sessions: The Indo-Ceylon Problem

Why The Indo-Ceylon Talks Broke Down
Raj Wanted Full Rights for 900,000 Indians
"Impossible to Agree" Says Mr. Senanayake

The main facts concerning the discussions at the Indo-culture, in his speech as Chairman of the Reception month and the reasons for the failure of the talks, were made known by Mr. D. S. Senanayake, Minister of Agriculture, in his speech as Chairman of the Reception Committee, Ceylon National Congress, at Mirigama yesterday.

Mr. Senanayake gave details of the proposals made by the delegation of Ceylon Ministers regarding the status of Indians resident in Ceylon, as well as the counter-proposals submitted by the representatives of the Indian Government, including Sir Girja S. Bajpai and Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar.

Explaining the differences between the two sets of proposals, Mr. Senanayake said: "We proposed that the franchise should be given to all Indians now in Ceylon who have permanently settled down here and that full rights of citizenship should be given only to the second generation of such Indians."

Impossible To Agree

"Their proposal was that full rights of citizenship, with very minor restrictions, should be given to all Indians who have lived five years in Ceylon and have their families here. Their proposals would practically amount to our having to confer full rights of citizenship on the entire 900,000 Indians now in Ceylon, except to those who choose to leave Ceylon. We found it impossible to agree to these proposals, and so the Conference had to end in this unsatisfactory manner."

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1. *Ceylon Observer*, 22 December 1940.

Mr. Senanayake also made pointed reference to what India herself does in regard to British subjects from other parts of the Empire who reside in India.

In the course of his speech, Mr. Senanayake said: "As you are aware, it was not found possible to arrive at any agreement. In fact the hopes with which we went to India were not fulfilled. We on our part went on this pilgrimage to India full of hope, considering the age-long cultural and racial connections we have with the peoples of India. It was therefore in the spirit of trying to arrive at a mutual understanding to bridge any differences that may have arisen to mar the friendliness of the two countries that we went to India. But we failed."

Visit Not Futile

"Although we failed in the immediate purpose of our visit, I would certainly not say that our visit has been futile. I think it has served a very useful purpose. It has shown us clearly how we stand in relation to the present Government of India. It has also shown us that when we are faced with problems and dangers it is useless our expecting others to help us to solve those problems or ward off those dangers.

Well, to get back to what happened in India. We were treated with the greatest courtesy by the representatives of the Government of India led by Sir G. S. Bajpai, member of the Viceroy's Executive Council, and Sir A. Ramaswami Mudaliar.

Our discussion commenced with the question of the status of Indians in Ceylon and the first matter discussed was the conditions on which the franchise would be granted to them. We were invited to state our views, and I should like to tell you briefly the point of view which we put forward as a basis for discussion.

At the present time there are about 900,000 Indians in Ceylon of whom about 600,000 are labourers employed on tea and rubber estates. That is to say, the Indians already constitute very nearly one-sixth of the population of this

Island. There is every indication that if unrestricted immigration is permitted this proportion will be rapidly increased."

Great Deal of Unemployment

"Our island is a small one and the opportunities open to our people for employment and for making a livelihood are limited. Our own population is increasing and already there is a great deal of unemployment. In Colombo alone there are over 30,000 unemployed, whereas the Indian population of Colombo would exceed that number.

Owing to this situation it is increasingly becoming the duty of the state to adopt measures to better the economic condition of the people on the one hand, and to give relief to the unemployed on the other.

Already the taxpayer has been called upon to bear burdens for this purpose, and heavier burdens are in store in the future. Land colonisation schemes, measures to provide industrial opportunities, unemployment relief, etc, are in operation and more such schemes are bound to come in the future. On unemployment relief alone we have spent twelve million rupees during the past 10 years.

All these schemes, worked at the expense of the taxpayer, are for the benefit of all Ceylonese, that is to say of all persons who are entitled to full rights of citizenship in our body politic. It is unthinkable that we should give these full rights of citizenship to people who have not made Ceylon their permanent home.

The vast majority of the Indians in Ceylon consider India to be their home and Ceylon their place of occupation. They have no intention of permanently settling down in Ceylon. They do not bring their families here. They are here only to earn and make money and take it away to India."

Only Material Ties

"They have no ties except purely material ones with this island or its inhabitants. They have no interest in its affairs except in so far as their employment or business is affected.

It is a characteristic feature of their life in this island that they live as sparingly as possible; they do not spend their money in this island. They take little interest in its social or political or economic life except in so far as their material interests are affected.

If these people are to be given the franches without restriction and admitted to full rights of citizenship we would be taking upon ourselves intolerable burdens and facing grave dangers. These sojourners would be entitled to share in all the measures which we adopt for the economic amelioration of the condition of our people. We shall have to give them lands, provide them with facilities for industrial advancement. and when they are unemployed provide them with relief.

On the other hand, there is a small minority of Indians who have made Ceylon their permanent home and in their way of living have identified themselves with us. To them, we are willing to extent the full rights of citizenship and to treat them as Ceylonese."

Tentative Proposals

Mr. Senanayake, continuing said: "On these principles we placed before the Conference certain tentative proposals laying down the conditions under which the status of Indians in Ceylon should be determined.

They were as follows: (1) 'Persons of Indian descent who possess a Ceylon domicile of origin, i.e. those born in Ceylon of a father having a Ceylon domicile of origin or of choice, will be considered Ceylonese and will be entitled to all the rights and privileges of Ceylonese.'

(2) 'Other persons of Indian descent now resident in Ceylon—These will be entitled to the rights and privileges normally accorded to British subjects. Within this class those who possess a Ceylon domicile of choice (which must include 5 years' residence) will be entitled to State Council franchise but will not be entitled to certain privileges reserved for Ceylonese, e.g., under the Land Development Ordinance and the Fisheries Ordinance; and to apply for

posts under the Ceylon Government. The whole of this class, i.e., other persons of Indian descent now resident in Ceylon, will be entitled on application to certificates of residence entitling them to reside and their living in Ceylon subject to such conditions as may be set out in the certificate."

Three Classes

"On our proposals Indians now in Ceylon may be divided into three classes:

(i) The second generation of Indians who have made Ceylon their permanent home. To these we give full rights citizenship and treat them as Ceylonese for all purposes.

(ii) Those Indians now in Ceylon who have made Ceylon their permanent home, irrespective of who their parents were, and have resided at least five years. To these we not only give the right to continue to reside and earn their living but also they will be entitled to the franchise. But they will not be entitled to certain special benefits, e.g. obtaining Crown land under Government schemes, etc.

(iii) Those Indians now in Ceylon who have not settled permanently here but continue to have connections with India. These will be entitled to obtain certificates to enable them to continue to reside and earn their living, but they will not have any other rights such as the franchise."

Counter-Proposals

"The representatives of the Government of India rejected these proposals and made the following counter-proposals:

'(1) Our category (i), giving full rights of citizenship to the second generation of Indians permanently settled in Ceylon, to remain.'

'(2) Full rights of citizenship, with the exception stated below, to be conferred on all Indians who can furnish proof, (a) of five years' residence, and (b) of a permanent interest in the Island.

The fact that a married person lives in Ceylon with his wife and children should suffice to raise the presumption of permanent interest. Similar tests to be adopted for unmarried persons. The only exceptions from the full rights of citizenship applicable to this class are the following: (i) They may not claim the right of appointment in the Ceylon Government Service but their descendants are to be entitled to it. (ii) They may not claim grants of Crown land already set apart for Ceylonese, but they are to have equality of rights to all other Crown land.'

'(3) Other Indians not coming under the above classes to be entitled to engage in any lawful vocation or calling which they now exercise or may hereafter exercise, without discrimination. These Indians now in Ceylon may however qualify in the future to come within category (2)'

The Difference

"The difference between our proposals and those of the Indian Government representatives may be briefly put as follows: We proposed that the franchise should be given to all Indians now in Ceylon who have permanently settled down here, and that full rights of citizenship should be given only to the second generation of such Indians. Their proposal is that full rights of citizenship with very minor restrictions should be given to all Indians who have lived five years in Ceylon and have their families here.

These proposals would practically amount to our having to confer full rights of citizenship on the entire 900,000 Indians now in Ceylon irrespective of the fact that their real home is India and not Ceylon, except to those who choose to leave Ceylon.

We found it impossible to agree to these proposals and so the Conference had to end in this unsatisfactory manner. We suggested that the proposed Indo-Ceylon trade talks be taken up, but the representatives of the Government of India said that as no mutual goodwill had been established they were not prepared to discuss questions of trade between the two countries."

India's Attitude To "Foreigners"

Mr. Senanayake next referred to what India herself does in regard to British subjects from other parts of the Empire who reside in India.

He said : "Under the Foreigners' Act of 1939 of Madras the following definition of 'Foreigner' appears : I understand that this is taken from the Government of India Act ·

'Foreigner' includes every person other than—' (1) a British subject domiciled in the United Kingdom ; (2) a British Indian subject : ' (3) a Ruler or a subject of an Indian State, and ' (4) a Consul General, Vice-Consul or a person appointed by a foreign Government to exercise diplomatic functions.'

So that, if the law of India prevailed in Ceylon all the Indians living in Ceylon would be classed as 'foreigners' and not entitled to any rights of citizenship. Our proposals are to give those who have made Ceylon their home certain definite rights, and we are told that this is discrimination.

Air Force Restrictions

"Again, enlistment in the Air Forces of India is regulated by the following rule :

'A candidate must be a subject of His Majesty's or of an Indian State, and—' (a) He must be of unmixed Indian descent ; or

' (b) if he is of mixed Indian and non-Indian descent, he must be domiciled in India : or

' (c) if he is of unmixed non-Indian Asiatic descent he must be domiciled in India and his father and grandfather must also be or, if deceased, have been domiciled in India.'

This means that a Ceylonese cannot get into the Indian Air Force unless he is in the third generation of persons domiciled in India. Our proposals for the grant of full rights of citizenship are for those of the second generation of Indians domiciled in Ceylon. But the Indian Government refuses to agree to it.

Then again those of you who have visited India woul know that employment in the Government Services of th various Provinces and Indian States of India is not open t all Indians of any Province. For example, in Mysore, al except Mysoreans are kept out; in Madras no one but Madrasi is appointed to a Government post unless there i no Madrasi available."

The Case of Bihar

"In the Province of Bihar, the Government is unde obligation to recruit its own services only from Biharees There was agitation among Biharees against the employment of Bengalees from the adjoining Province of Bengal and a Committee appointed to go into the question recommended that—

No person should be regarded as domiciled in the Province unless he can produce a certificate to that effect from the District Officer of the District in which he claims to be a resident. Before granting a certificate of domicile to any person, the District Officer should satisfy himself that his family is permanently settled in the Province and that he has adopted Bihar as his home and has no intention of returning to his country of origin.

I am told that this recommendation has not actually found the place in the statute book of Bihar, but it is a proposal put forward by a Committee appointed by the Congress Government of Bihar.

This, it must be remembered is as between two Provinces of India itself, as between Biharees and Bengalees. When Indians who differ from us very greatly in habits and ways of living and who look to India as their home, come to our country and we want to impose a similar rule in regard to the test of their domicile here, the Government of India says 'No, if a man has lived five years in Ceylon and has his family living with him you must treat him as domiciled whether he has made his permanent home in Ceylon or not'."

Assurance by Governor

Mr. Senanayake referred to "the definite assurance" given to the people of Ceylon by Sir Herbert Stanley, in his despatch of June 2, 1929. Sir Herbert Stanley had suggested that the test of "abiding interest" and "permanent settlement" should be five years' residence plus a declaration of permanent settlement and a certificate to be issued on payment of a fee not exceeding one rupee.

Lord Passfield, the Secretary of State at the time, endorsed these suggestions in his despatch of October 10, 1929 in which he said:

'I propose to adopt your suggestions under which subject special provisions being made for British subjects not domiciled in Ceylon being allowed to qualify for the franchise in accordance with the conditions of the present Constitution, domicile should be the standard test for inclusion in the Register .... The applicant provided he can furnish satisfactory evidence of five years' residence should be qualified for the vote on the production of a certificate of permanent settlement granted by some duly appointed officer. I propose that provision should be made for this qualification in the Order-in-Council.'

What Actually Happened

Though the requirements were proof of permanent settlement in Ceylon and at least five years' residence, what actually happened, said Mr. Senanayake, was that all estate labourers were registered wholesale in the lists of voters without any inquiry regarding permanent settlement; no certificates were required; not even the minimum of five years' residence was verified.

"This is how the British people carried out this undertaking to the people of this country," said Mr. Senanayake. "This betrayal of our people, of Kandyan people, is one of the darkest blots in the annals of British Administration in Ceylon."

"The lands of the Kandyans were confiscated and given over to British capitalists, Indians in large numbers were brought out as labourers and after a promise was solemnly given that only those Indians who are permanently settled in this country should have the vote, we find the Kandyan vote swamped by a preponderance of estate labourers who have been registered by British officials without any regard to these promises."

Position of Kandyans

Mr. Senanayake referred to the present state of the Kandyan Provinces which were "nothing but a vast estate owned by the British capitalist and peopled by the Indian labourer and kangany."

To find the Kandyans, he said, "you have to grope your way into the tiny hamlets around a few miserable paddy fields; but if you go into one of these hamlets and make inquiries you will find that the paddy fields are really owned by an Indian kangany who made his money on the neighbouring estate and that the Kandyans are only his cultivators and hirelings; you will find that the only boutique in the hamlet is run by an Indian trader who has by his sharper wits and his cold and calculating methods ousted a Ceylonese Muslim trader who had been there for generations. You will find that the Kandyan is head over ears in debt to the Indian moneylender."

He next mentioned that the same conditions existed in the Low-country, in the towns and in the residential quarters of the middle classes of the Ceylonese.

"No one but a man who is absolutely blind or dishonest can fail to see that within the last few decades the Indians in Ceylon have made enormous strides in ousting our people out [illegible] business and property. Compared to their own c[illegible] on ha[illegible] a veritable paradise to them," he s[illegible]

Lying Tales

Continuing, he said: "When those are the facts, it is a most depressing thought that some amongst them whose parents have made fortunes in Ceylon and who today are living in comfort and luxury only because of the hospitality of the people of Ceylon, should betray this country by carrying to India lying tales of imaginary ill-treatment and imaginary grievances. All this is for their own selfish political ends.

I make bold to say that the chief reason why our Conference with the representatives of the Indian Government failed was because of the poisonous atmosphere already created by these so-called Indian leaders from Ceylon, who are betraying this country.

The Indian delegates broke off the Conference because mutual goodwill had not been established. What chance was there for mutual goodwill to be established when the air had already been poisoned?"

Referring to the [illegible] Indians in employment in Ceylon, Mr. [illegible] said: "When the State Council took the very reasonable and moderate step of [illegible] certain [illegible] Indian employees [illegible] appointed in [illegible] of the [illegible] Government [illegible] were available, we were [illegible]

Mr. [illegible] mentioned that the Indian [illegible] not only in South Africa and Ceylon [illegible] other countries.

[illegible]

Self-governing countries like South Africa [illegible] [illegible] had been [illegible] Indian [illegible]

In Siam (Thailand) there were very stringent regulations against the entry into that country of Indians and Chinese who have hitherto exploited the country.

" We in this country have been, so far, looking to the British for the protection of our interests, and I have shown you how grievously the British officials in Ceylon have disappointed us, " said Mr. Senanayake. " But I have every confidence that if the true position, the real plight, of our people is placed before the British public and the British Parliament we shall have the protection which we need."

In concluding, Mr. Senanayake said: " I appeal to you with all the earnestness at my command to realise that unless we stem the tide of this growing domination of Indians in Ceylon in our economic and political life, our extinction as a Ceylonese nation is inevitable."

J. Statement of Accounts Concerning The Swadeshi Exhibition and The Annual Session at Mirigama in 1940*

	Receipts	Rs.	c.
To	Subscriptions (statement A) ..	515	0
,,	Rent of Stalls (statement B) ..	60	0
,,	Amount recovered by sale of mats ..	2	0
,,	Refund A/c Meals provided to Co-operative Officers ..	7	48
,,	Amount recovered by sale of Building Materials	30	0
,,	Amount recovered by sale of balance rice	8	0
,,	Amount received from the General A/c of Congress . ..	606	60
		1,229	08

	Expenditure	Rs.	c.
By	paid for Buildings (statement C i) ..	286	35
,,	paid for Lighting and Amplifier (statement C ii)	352	10
,,	paid for Printing, Advertising and Clerical work (statement C iii) ..	136	25
,,	paid for Pageant (statement C iv) ..	169	78
,,	paid for Miscellaneous Expenses (statement C v) . .	284	60
		1,229	08

J. E Amaratunga,
Hony. Treasurer,
Ceylon National Congress Sessions and
Exhibition Sub-Committee.

Audited and found correct.
A. M. Clement Dias,
Hony. Auditor.

* From the last page of the 1940 Annual Report (C.N.A., 60/105)

36. TWENTY-THIRD ANNUAL SESSIONS, 27-30 DECEMBER 1941

A. Circular Letter with draft of Programme[1]

Congress Office,
Borella Flats,
Borella,
15th October, 1941.

Dear Friend,

The 22nd [*sic*] annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress Party will be held at " Swaraj Pura, " Dummaladeniya, on the Negombo-Chilaw Road from Saturday the 27th December 1941 to Tuesday the 30th December 1941. The railway station is Bolawatta.

An omnibus service will run to the sessions grounds.

The draft programme is as follows:

1. Saturday the 27th December 1941	—	2 p.m. Swadeshi Exhibition opens.
2. Saturday the 27th December and Sunday the 28th December 1941	—	Conference of Chilaw Congress. Associations: (Chilaw District Mahajana Sabha Sammelanaya).
3. Sunday the 28th December 1941	—	Evening: Conference of Presidents and Secretaries of Congress Associations.
4. Monday the 29th December 1941	—	9 a.m. All-Ceylon Congress Committee Meeting. 3 p.m. Presidential Procession.

[1] C. N. A., 60/67; a leaflet of 2 sheets printed by the L. V. Press and containing both English and Sinhalese versions. Among the documents was another leaflet in gay colours (60/105) which contained a letter of invitation signed by D. Peter Perera, Chairman of the Reception Committee, and which provided details about the programme. This leaflet was in three languages: Sinhalese, Tamil and English.

4 p.m. Addresses : Chairman of the Reception Committee and President.

5. Tuesday the 30th
December 1941 — Whole day : Annual Sessions of the Congress Party.

The Swadeshi Exhibition continues from the 27th to 30th December, 1941.

National plays will be staged on Saturday, Sunday, Monday and Tuesday nights.

Delegates to the sessions and to the All-Ceylon Congress Committee are expected on Monday the 29th morning. Accommodation will be provided at Swaraj Pura on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday nights

Please write and let us know when you are coming so that we may send you your delegates' badges. Accommodation will be provided only to those who have applied for and received delegates' badges.

It is hoped that the delegates will be in national costume made of Ceylon cloth in accordance with the resolution passed by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee.

Swadeshi Exhibition

The Swadeshi Exhibition will continue from 27th December to 30th December, 1941. Will those interested please communicate with Sessions Secretaries, Congress Office, Borella Flats, Borella.

All Ceylon Congress Committee

The All Ceylon Congress Committee meets at 9 a.m. on Sunday, the 9th November at the Congress Office. Notice of motions must reach us by the 30th October. The President of the Congress will be elected at this meeting.

Yours Truly,
Dudley Senanayake,
J. R. Jayewardene,
Jt. Hony. Secretaries,
Ceylon National Congress Party.

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B. CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE 22ND DECEMBER, 1941[1]

Congress Office,
Borella Flats,
Borella,
Colombo, 22nd December, 1941.

Dear Friend,

I fully realise the difficulty of travelling at this time and I am therefore writing to press on your attention that whatever the difficulty, your attendance and the attendance of delegates from your association to the sessions is essential, at this time of National emergency. A resolution dealing with that emergency is printed below.

All arrangements for the comfort and convenience of 500 delegates have been arranged.

Delegates who cannot come by car may do so by bus, or by railway to Bolawatta Station, from there a special bus service will run to "Swarajya Pura."

The important days are the 29th and 30th. Delegates should come on the 28th Sunday evening.

Yours Truly,
G. C. S. Corea,
President-elect, C. N. C. Party.

Resolution

"In view of the existing emergency this sessions requests the Government to take steps to protect the people of this country and in particular to adopt such measures as:

(a) the promulgation of an internal defence scheme,

(b) air raid precautions,

(c) the increase of food production,

(d) strengthening of defences.

1. C.N.A., 60/69: A single-sheet leaflet with the Sinhalese version on the other side.

This sessions will support the Government in these measures and urges that representatives of the people should be associated in all these steps."

C. Programme and Resolutions[1]

Saturday, 27th Dec., 1941 2 p.m.	—	Opening of Swadeshi Exhibition and selection of prize-winners.
27th and 28th Dec., 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.	—	Conference of Chilaw Congress Associations (Chilaw Dist. Mahajana Sabha Sammelanaya).
Sunday, 28th Dec., 6 p.m.	—	Conference of Presidents and Secretaries of Congress Associations.
Sunday, 28th Dec., 9.30 p.m.	—	A play called "Swarajya" by Chilaw District Associations.
Monday, 29th Dec., 9 a.m.		All Ceylon Congress Committee Meeting.
Monday, 29th Dec., 12 noon	—	Award of Prizes to Competitors.
Monday, 29th Dec., 3 p.m.	—	Presidential Procession.
Monday, 29th Dec. 4 p.m.	—	Address by the Chairman, Reception Committee.
		Address by the Congress President.
Tuesday, 30th Dec., whole day	—	Business Sessions of the Congress Party.

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1. C.N.A., 60/68 ; a pamphlet printed by the Maha Bodhi Press, Colombo 14 pages ; containing both English and Sinhalese

The Swadeshi Exhibition continues from 27th to 30th December.

Office-bearers for 1942

President: Mr. G. C. S. Corea,

Hony. Secretaries: Mr. Dudley Senanyake, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene,

Hony. Treasurer: Mr. J. E. Amaratunga,

Hony. Auditor: Mr. A. M. Clement Dias,

Chairman of the Reception Committee: Mr. D. Peter Perera.

Congress Office,
Borella Flats,
Borella, 20.12.41.

Resolutions to be moved at the 23rd Sessions of the Congress Party

A. Political

All Ceylon Congress Committee Resolutions.

1. A Free Constitution

"This Congress while reiterating the right of the people of Lanka to be a free people, authorises the Working Committee to prepare, and to take steps, to introduce in the State Council an Ordinance repealing the State Council's Order-in-Council and creating a Constitution for a free Lanka.

This Committee is requested to make every effort to secure for this Constitution the widest measure of agreement from among the various communities living in this country."

2. Commission on Reforms

"The All Ceylon Congress Committee asserts that the people of Ceylon have the immediate right to be free and

as such condemns the suggested appointment of a Parliamentary Commission or Conference to discuss reforms after the war.

As a protest the Committee recommends to the 22nd [*sic*] Sessions of the Congress the organisation of an island-wide boycott of the suggested commission or conference, by Ministers of State, State Councillors, members of local bodies, Congress members and all other self-respecting citizens of Lanka."

3. Detenues

"This Sessions is of opinion that the four detenues detained without trial should be immediately released."

4. Indo-Ceylon Agreement

"Whereas the Indo-Ceylon Agreement provides for: (*a*) the immediate restriction of the immigration of non-Ceylonese into Ceylon, (*b*) further restrictions on the grant of the franchise to non-Ceylonese, (*c*) a final settlement of the status of Indians now resident in Ceylon, (*d*) the control of the employment of non-Ceylonese in business houses, (*e*) future trade negotiations between India and Ceylon, this Sessions recommends the acceptance of the said agreement."

B. *Workers and Peasants*

5. A Charter

"The policy of the Congress includes the organisation of the economic life of the worker and the peasant to secure for them a decent standard of living by which is meant, the provision of sufficient food, clothing and housing, as well as other necessaries, and such amenities as education, medical aid, amusement and leisure hours, which between them make up a reasonable standard of civilised life.

With a view to supplying the omissions and remedying the defects in our social legislation
provision of the above beenfits, the

necessity for suitable legislation, providing for,

(*a*) a living wage,
(b) healthy conditions of work,
(*c*) limited hours of work, which must not exceed 8 hours of work a day,
(*d*) fixed hours of leisure,
(*e*) insurance for old age, sickness, unemployment and accident,
(*f*) maternity benefits for women,
(*g*) machinery for settlement of disputes between employer and employee,
(*h*) against unwarranted dismissal from service.

6. Labour Settlements

"Whereas large industrial and agricultural works employing workers are being established throughout the country, this Sessions is of opinion the employers should be bound to furnish to their workmen comfortable and sanitary dwelling places, establish schools, dispensaries and other services necessary to the community of workers.

Whenever the labour population in any new establishment exceeds 100, the Government should, by legislation, compel the creation of labour settlements. By the reservation of land, the construction of houses and other buildings necessary for the leading of a corporate life."

C. Commerce and Industries

Panadura and Matara Associations to move:

7. "In view of the important connection which trade has with the development of the country, and in view of the fact that Ceylonese are backward in trade, the Congress decides to take all steps to encourage the formation of big and small trading organisations to deal with internal trade as well as the export and import trade, either with or without financial and other assistance from the Government."

D. Medical

Otara Palata, Bingiriya and Matara Associations to move:

8. "The Congress urges the opening of Ayurvedic hospitals and dispensaries throughout the island and also urges the Government to grant equal recognition to Ayurveda as to Western medicine."

E. Education

Mr L. M. Gooneratne to move:

9. "The Congress urges the immediate establishment of the University of Ceylon as a residential University and also asks that provision be made for the grant by the Government of a suitable number of Scholarships for the benefit of those who may be unable to afford the expense of a University Education."

Otara Palata Association to move:

10. "As the present system of adult education is not suited to the country the Congress urges that it should be changed."

Otara Palata Association to move:

11. "This Sessions is of opinion that school teachers should be permitted to participate in local government politics."

Kammal Pattuwa Association to move:

12 "This Congress is of opinion that a number of annual Scholarships should be created by the State enabling students to prosecute their studies in industrial, commercial, banking, financial and technical college outside the Island."

F. Miscellaneous

Uturu Yatakalan Pattuwa Association to move:

13. "The Government grant to the S. P. C. A. should be stopped."

Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa to move:

14. "A census of the population of Ceylon should be taken."

Badulla Association to move:

15. "This Congress is of opinion that:

(a) All affidavits should be allowed to be in the mother tongue and powers of certification be granted only to those who know such languages.

(b) All tenders in Government departments, municipalities, urban councils and village committees should be in Sinhalese or Tamil.

(c) All printed notices and forms specially in the postal, railway and the agricultural departments should be in Sinhalese or Tamil.

(d) All correspondence received by Government departments in a particular language should be *replied [sic] in that language.*

(e) All correspondence sent by Village Committees, co-operative societies, education and other departments should be in the mother tongue."

Mr. L. M. Gooneratne to move:

16. "The Ceylon National Congress condemns the policy of the Police initiating various schemes without the prior knowledge of the Home Committee or the approval of the Minister concerned and requests the Hon'ble the Minister for Home Affairs to evolve a better and more effective policy early to have full control of the Police Department."

G. Work to be done by Congress

All Ceylon Congress Committee Resolutions

17. A National Volunteer Force

"This Sessions requests the All-Ceylon Congress Committee to take immediate steps to establish during the ensuing year a National Volunteer Force to be trained for

national service and to propagate the policy and programme of the Ceylon National Congress Party throughout the Island."

18. Colours

"This Sessions is of opinion that the Congress colours should be red, yellow and green and the Congress flag should consist of equal and parallel bands of the same colours."

19. Constitution

"The Constitution of the Congress Party be altered according to the draft rules circulated to delegates."

20. A Congress Hall and Paper

Grandpass Association to move:

"This Sessions is of opinion that the Congress should have a building of its own, consisting of a Congress hall, a printing press to start a weekly paper and two other apartments to be rented out for the upkeep of the management."

D. Minutes of the Sessions[1]

Summary of the events and proceedings during the [twenty third] annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress Party *held at "Swarajyapura" Dummaladeniya* from 27th to 30th December, 1941.

Opening of the Swadeshi Exhibition: On Saturday the 27th December at 2 p.m. Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, the President of the previous year, opened the exhibition, *amidst the cheers of thousands from various provinces* throughout the island who had assembled near the entrance. From that moment a large crowd entered "Swarajyapura" and attended the exhibition. A degree of

1. These minutes were recorded in Sinhalese. So were the minutes of all the sessions that follow. Mr. P. G. Karunasiri helped me to translate these minutes.

enthusiasm that outmatched anything that had featured other celebrations in Ceylon was displayed by the patriotic and keen populace at the exhibition.

Conference of the Chilaw District Congress Associations: The above conference was held on the 27th and 28th and about thirty resolutions were considered and adopted to ensure the greatest benefit of the greatest number.

Conference of the Presidents and Secretaries of Congress Associations: The above conference was held on the 28th at 6.30 p.m. The delegates discussed ways and means of serving the country, and the programme that should be launched to maintain the strength of the Congress associations. The Jt. Secretaries of the Congress, Dudley Senanayake and J. R. Jayewardene, expressed their views and explained in detail the work that must be done by the Congress in the ensuing year. The other delegates and secretaries indicated the various difficulties and main obstacles that confronted them and which hindered the activities of the associations. Mr. G. C. S. Corea, the President-elect, suggested various means of overcoming such difficulties from the experience he had gained in organising branch associations in every village council area in the Chilaw District.

Arrival of the President at "Swarajyapura:" By about 2 p.m. "Swarajyapura" was swamped by large crowds from every part of the island. Although the sun shone brightly the soft breeze passing through the coconut palms brought almost inexpressible relief to the gathering. At 3 p.m. a group of male and female volunteer workers took their places smartly in front of the entrance to "Swarajyapura." A few moments later the President, clad in Congress national contume, arrived at the gate with his wife and was greeted by the out-going President, the office bearers, and the delegates amidst the cheers of the gathering. The President, Mr. G. C. S. Corea, was garlanded by the outgoing President with a red, green and yellow coloured handwoven cotton garland made at a Congress weaving centre. He was then conducted to the flag post. Mr. Corea, taking a tri colour string handed

over to him by the Chairman of the Reception Committee, hoisted the tri colour Congress national flag, while the patriots gathered around sang the Congress national song. Thereafter the President and committee members were conducted to the rostrum where they took their seats comfortably on the cushions and mattresses. Among the large crowd which gathered and which was packed tightly together like sardines, there were Muslims and Burghers also. Volunteer male and female workers were used to control the crowd. As a result a quietness prevailed among the crowd. Particularly noticeable was the fact that the majority of the delegates were clad in cloth and banian.

Address by Chairman of the Reception Committee: Mr. D. Peter Perera, the Chairman of the Reception Committee, then delivered his address welcoming the President and the delegates and extending his warm thanks to the gathering for the magnificient response to the Call of the Congress. He ended his speech by presenting his views on the economic decline of the Ceylonese and suggesting means by which Congress could effect a revival.

Presidential Address: The President, Mr. G. C. S. Corea, then delivered the presidential address. The following is a summary of his clarion call for freedom: "We extend our support to the Allies who are fighting to preserve freedom during his World War; we too yearn for freedom. We give our support with the hope of winning our own freedom. A victory for Allies serves no purpose to us if it does not pave the way for our own independence. Our ultimate goal should not be mere constitutional reforms but independence, and complete ruling power for our people, with the freedom to draft our own constitution."

After his speech the celebrations ended.

A play called "Swarajya:" The delegates were entertained to a play called "Swarajya" staged by the Chilaw District Congress Associations. It depicted the present political set-up and the present state of the country.

Business Sessions: The business sessions of the Ceylon National Congress commenced on the 29th at 9.30 a.m. at "Swarajyapura" with the President-elect, Mr. G. C. S. Corea, in the chair. About 500 delegates representing every branch association attended the sessions.

Telegrams: Telegrams sent by Messrs. Simon Abeywickrema, Sir D. B. Jayatilaka, and the President of the Burgher Political Associatoin regretting their inability to attend the sessions were tabled:

Letters: Letters sent by Messrs. H. R. Freeman, W. K. T. Iddawela, Dr. E. V. Ratnam, A. Ratnayake, Sir Wilfred de Soysa, H. E. P. de Mel, S. Shirley Corea, W. Y. Fernando, Wilfred Gunesekera, A. C. R. Corea, Graham Panditha-sekera, M. D. D. S. Dharmasena, L. O. Fernando, G. L. Simon, H. P. de Saram, M. G. P. Fernando, S. W. L. Fernando and from the Managing Editor of *Kesari* newspaper, Chairman of the V. C. Anamaduwa, Chairman of the U. C. Nawalapitiya, regretting their inability to attend the session, were read.

The Annual Report and the Statement of Accounts: Copies of the Annual Report for the year 1941, and the Statement of Accounts were distributed among the delegates. Mr. Stanley de Zoysa proposed the adoption of this report and it was confirmed by the house.

Resolutions

Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne moved the 1st resolution on the agenda regarding a free constitution. Mr. Siripala Samarakkody seconded Messrs. P. H. Abraham Silva, P. Givendrasinghe, D. G. Weerasinghe, Stanley de Zoysa, L. M. Gooneratne, Francis de Zoysa, Dudley Senanayake and George E. de Silva, spoke on this resolution. Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa then proposed that a vote should be taken on the motion before any further discussion. Mr. P. H. Abraham Silva seconded. The proposal was carried and the resolution was put to the house. At this stage A. Francis Pieris of the Dunagaha Congress and H. A. Chandrasena, a primary member, said that they wished to present some

points against the motion and requested permission from the Chairman to express their views on the resolution. Following their speeches a vote was taken and the resolution was carried.

Gilbert Perera proposed the second resolution on the agenda, a resolution which concerned the reforms conference. P. D. S. Jayasekera seconded it. M. P. Mendis of Kammal Pattu expressed views against the motion. Ultimately the house approved of the resolution.

Mr. H. A. Koattegoda moved the 3rd resolution in the agenda regarding detenues. Mr. A. Francis Pieris seconded. Mr. Ariyawansa Jothipala of the Aluthkade Association spoke in favour of the resolution Messrs L. M. Gooneratne, A. S. Tennakoon, and Jamis Silva spoke against it. Ultimately the resolution was adopted.

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene moved the 4th resolution, regarding the Indo-Ceylon problem, on the agenda. Mr. Stanley de Zoysa proposed that the resolution should be put forward at a special general meeting. It was rejected by the house and Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa seconded the original motion. Mr. Stanley de Zoysa then proposed that the discussion should be postponed. Mr. D. V. Algama of the Kelaniya Congress seconded. It was rejected by the house. Thereafter delegates from a number of districts revealed the different viewpoints that prevailed regarding the Indo-Ceylon agreement. An answer to these views was then sought from Mr. D S. Senanayake.

At this stage the house adjourned for lunch.

On the sessions resuming after lunch, Mr. D. S. Senanayake thanked the Chilaw District Congress Association for the excellent arrangements made towards the success of the sessions and answered all the questions raised on the Indo-Ceylon agreement. Mr. G. C. S. Corea, the President-elect, also expressed his views on this problem. The delegates were satisfied with these explanations.

A proposal concerning the welfare of the worker and the peasant, the 5th and 6th resolutions on the agenda, was proposed by J. A. L. Cooray of the Wadduwa Congress. P. P. Siriwardena of Oyaboda Peruwa Congress, Kuruwita Gunasekera and G. H. Albert Perera spoke on the motion It was adopted without any opposition.

Proposals regarding the work to be undertaken by Congress, resolutions 17, 18 and 19 on the agenda were proposed by W. D. S. Gauthamadasa of the Yagam Pattu Congress. Mr. J. R. Jayewardene seconded and the resolution was adopted unanimously.

Mr. Jamis Silva of the Grandpass Congress moved the 20th resolution in the agenda, concerning the establishment of a newspaper printing press and a Congress hall. Mr. W. G. Perera seconded. The resolution was adopted.

Mr. W. R. Wijemanne of the Panadura Congress moved the 7th resolution, regarding medical services. Mr. A. S. Tennekoon of Yagam Pattu Congress seconded. Adopted unanimously.

Due to lack of time the remaining resolutions were postponed for discussion at the All Ceylon Congress Committee. Thereafter the election of members to the A.C.C.C. took place.

Distribution of Prizes: Mr. George E. de Silva of the Kandy Congress distributed the prizes to the winners at the Swadeshi Exhibition.

Conclusion: The President then expressed his warm thanks to the large number of delegates present, to the office bearers and to all who endeavoured to make the sessions a succeess. He also requested their support in implementing the resolutions adopted at the sessions and solicited their adherence to the policies of the party.

The business having been concluded, all the delegates stood erect and sang the Congress national song.

Dudley Senanayake,
J. R. Jayewardene,
Jt. Hony Secretaries, 25.1.1942.

E. Swadeshi Exhibition Leaflet[1]

Swadeshi Exhibition

To be held on the 27th, 28th, 29th & 30th December, 1941

at the

Swarajja Pura, Dummaladeniya,
Wennappuwa

During the 22nd [sic] Sessions of the Ceylon National Congress

Rules and the List of Exhibits

Exhibition & Sessional Committee

Mr. A. Gnana Prakasam	
Mr. J. E. Amaratunga	Hony Treasurer
Mr. P. D. S. Jayasekera Mr. N. Wickremaratne	Hony. Joint Secretaries

Local Working Committee

hairman : The Hon'ble Mr. G. C. S Corea	Mr. G. A. A. Gunatilaka Mr. C. A. Randeni Mr. M. Pathirajah
Vice-Chairman : Mr. D. Peter Perera	Mr W. J. Lucas Fernando Mr. M Cyril Fernando Mr. H. K S. Appuhamy
Hony. Treasurer : Mr L. M. W. Senanayake	Mr. J. D Juso Appuhamy Mr. Albert F Pieris Mr. W. Martin Fernando
Hony. Jt. Secretaries : Mr. D. A. P. Kahawita Mr. W. D. S. Gauthamadasa	Mr. Alfred Fernando Mr. A. J E. Peries

Rules

1. The Exhibition and Fair will be held at Swarajjya Pura at Dummaladeniya, Wennappuwa on 27th, 28th & 30th December 1941.

2. All exhibits shall be those manufactured or produced in Ceylon not excluding articles produced or manufactured with imported raw materials.

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1. From the Gilbert Perera MSS : C.N.A., 25.21/10 ; Two sheets in gay colours printed by the Lankabhinava Press, Borella. A Sinhale version is available in a separate leaflet. With reference to the Swadeshi movement also refer to pp. 1379–82 and 1438 ff.

3. Stalls will be given free to exhibitors but allocation of stalls to applicants will be entirely at the discretion of the Secretaries. Trade stalls of required dimensions can be booked on payment of a fee and special facilities will be afforded to manufacturers and traders to display their goods.

4. Stall holders must have their stalls stocked with goods and made attractive before 12 noon on the 27th December 1941. All exhibits must be in their proper places before the judging begins.

5. The judging of exhibits for prizes will take place at 1 p.m. on the 27th December.

6. Exhibits may be sent by train addressed to the Hony. Secretaries of the Exhibition to the Railway Station, Bolawatta, at senders' risk, to reach the destination on or before the morning of the 27th December, 1941.

7. Prizes in Money, Medals and Certificates will be awarded to the best exhibits in each group of articles as decided by the Judges appointed for the purpose. Prizes will also be awarded to the best individual and group of dancers, acrobats and performers.

8. The Exhibition will be formally opened at 2 p.m. on the 27th December, 1941, and will remain open till 11 p.m. on that day and from 8 a.m. to 11 p.m. on the other days.

9. The sales of articles will commence after 4 p.m. on the 27th December and will be continued during the period of the Exhibition. Exhibitors may replenish their stalls with fresh articles on sale of what is in stock. Those exhibits sent by train will also be sold if the exhibitors write to the Secretaries expressing their desire to do so. The proceeds will be remitted to the owners.

10. Admission to the Exhibition will be free but the Secretaries or any person authorised by the Committee

shall have power to exclude any person present on the premises in the interests of the public or in the interests of the undertaking.

11. The Committee does not hold itself responsible for any loss incurred directly or indirectly in connection with the Exhibition.

12. In any matter in dispute the decision of the Committee shall be final.

List Of Exhibits

Agricultural

1. Grains and Pulses: Paddy, Husked rice, Milled rice, Kurakkan, Meneri, Ulundu, Amu, Kollu, Muneta, Tala, Me eta, Dhall, Karal Iringu, Bada Iringu, Tampala, etc. etc Any quantity, not less than a measure of each.

2. Yams and Tubers: Sweet Potatoes, Manioc, Innala, Kukulala, Vel-ala, Kiri-ala, Dehi-ala, Gahala, Des-ala, Tunmas-ala, Raja-ala, Raw ginger, Raw turmeric, Inguru-piyalee, Potatoes, Artichoke, Buthsarana-ala, Kohila-ala, Onions, etc. Any quantity, but not less than 1 lb. each.

3. Vegetables: All kinds of vegetables—Ash pumpkin, Ash plantain, Wattakka, Diyalabu, Snake gourd, Bitter gourd, Vetakolu, Bandakka, Capsicum, Radish, Spinach, Murunga, Brinjals, Kohila leaves, Cabbage, Turnips, Carrots, Beetroot, Jak, Bread fruit, Cucumber, Beans, Cowpeas, Me, Mondan plantains, Heen Miris, Chillies, Leeks, Batu, Kekeri, Tomatoes, etc. etc. Any quantity not less than a lb. each in weight.

4. Edible Herbs: Of all description. Not less than 1 bundle each. Mukunuvenna, Tampala, Katurumurunga, Kan-kun, Mussenda, Gotukola, Sarana, Torakola, Nivitikola, etc. etc.

5. Fruits: Oranges, Heennaran, Mandarin Orange, Pomelo, Grape fruits, Limes, Pears, Mangoes, Mangosteen, Rambutan, Uguressa, Weralu, Jambu, Waraka, Wela, Ripe plantations of all kind, Lovi, Nan-nam. Soursop. Custard

Apple, Papaw, Pineapple, Guavas, Peaches, Woodapple, Beli, Avocado pears, Durians, Dan, *Himbutu*, Passion Fruits, Pomegranate, Sapodilla, etc. etc. Any quantity.

6. School Gardens: Rural Scheme School and School Gardens Produce of all sorts.

7. Other Agricultural Produce: (*a*) Sugarcane, Coconut, King Coconuts, Kurumba, Betel, Arecanuts, Goraka, Tamarind, Dry chillies, Onions, Curry stuffs, Mustard, Nutmeg, Cloves, Kapok, Cocoa, etc. etc.

(*b*) Tea, Rubber, Cardamons, Dry Arecanut, Coconut oil, Copra, Poonac, Cinnamon, Cinnamon oil, Citronella oil Tobacco, Cigars, Cigarettes, Sugar, Kitul jaggery, Coconut jaggery, Palmyra jaggery, Kitul fibre, Coconut fibre, Hemp Kitul syrup, Coconut syrup, etc. etc.

Industrial

8. Miscellaneous Manufactures: Safety matches, Soaps, Panits, Buttons, Wooden tubs, Rattan Baskets, Batapotu baskets, Winnows, Kirigotu, Watti, Brooms, Ekelbrooms, Coir matting, Coir rugs, Dumbara mats, Ordinary mats, Hemp cushions, Whips, Paddy Bissas, Leather goods, Polishes, Ropes, Palmyrah baskets, etc. etc.

9. Carpentry: All kinds of household furniture—Beds, Chair, Tables, Carts, Rickshaws, Kuruni, Seru measures, etc.

10. Fishing Industry: Fishing nets of every description, Fishing boats, Dry fish, Salted fish, etc. etc.

11. Pottery: Pots and Pans, Tiles and bricks, Flower vases and stands, etc. etc. Improved pottery.

12. Textile: Clothes, Towels, Dusters, Kamboys, Sarongs, Shirting, Silk cloths, Sarees, curtain cloths, etc. Handloom and Mill Cloths.

13. Iron and Brass Work: Agricultural implements—Mamotty, Kattie, Axes, Knives, Ploughs, Household brass works, Chemboos, Pots, Spitoons, Betel stands, Trays, brass

stands, Alavangoos, Adzes, Forks, Hammers, Hatchets, Door handles, Towels, Door hinges, Door bolts, Hinges, Door springs, Hooks, Screws, Keys, Arecanut cutters, etc.

14. Lacquer work: Walking sticks, Penholders, Coconut shells, Powder boxes, Fancy goods, Teapoys, Chairs, etc.

15. Toys and Curios: Wooden toys, Paper toys, Lac toys, Brass toys, etc., Ebony and Ivory elephants, Dolls, all kinds of cottage industries, Kalutara baskets, etc.

16. Prepared Food: Sweet meats of all sorts, Pickles, Vinegar, Preserved fruits, Jams, Chutneys, Sauce, Lozenges, Confectionery, etc. etc.

Livestock

17. Livestock: Indigenous cows and bulls, Imported breed of cows and bulls, Milch cow and calf, Buffalo cow, Buffalo bull, a pair of ploughing bulls, a pair of ploughing buffaloes, a pair of cart bulls, Indigenous and imported breeds. A racing hackery and bull, goats, etc., etc.

18. Bee-hives: Working bee-hives, Bee honey, Beeswax, etc.

19. Poultry: Indigenous hens, cock birds, imported breed of hens and cock birds, eggs, chicken, etc.

Miscellaneous

20. Ayurvedic Medicines: All kinds of medicines, Oils, Pills, etc.

21. Demonstrations: Cloth and Mat-weaving, Pottery making, Lace-making, Carpentry, Lacquer-work, Brass-work, Blacksmithy, etc., etc.

22. Games and Amusements: Ankeliya, Polkeliya, Likeliya, Kadu-saranba, Kasa, Bambara, Pandu, Pinum, Kaju sellam, Borukakul, Virudu, Horana, Daul bera, Raban, Onchilla, Rukada, Olinda kote, Daan, Hakgedi and Physical displays, Boru kakul, competition in singing and dancing by school children, theatricals, etc.

23. Flowers : The best floral decorations of flower baskets or flower "Punkalas" carried in the Peraheras will receive prizes.

24. Carts : Travelling carts, Racing hackeries, Decorated travelling carts, Bullock carts, improved bullock carts.

25. Lectures : During the exhibition a series of lectures on Agriculture, Industries, Trade Fishing, Health and Sanitation will be delivered.

(Programmes will be published in due course)

All correspondence should be addressed to the Joint Secretaries, Swadeshi Exhibition, Congress Office, Borella Flats, Colombo.

F. "TIMES OF CEYLON" NEWS ITEM ON THE SWADESHI EXHIBITION[1]

Chilaw Bishop visits Mushroom Town

National Congress in Freedom Fight

His Lordship the Bishop of Chilaw paid a short visit to "Swarajapura," or the Congress City, after it was declared open by Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, President of Congress, to the accompaniment of a victory cry, Jayasri! Jayasri! Jayasri!—which rent the air of Dummaladeniya in the district of Chilaw, yesterday afternoon.

The opening of the city was also the opening of the swadeshi exhibition, which is part and parcel of the 22nd [*sic*] annual session of the Ceylon National Congress to which delegates began coming in from all parts of the island from yesterday morning. The presidential address by Mr. G. C. S. Corea, who has been elected president for 1942, will be delivered tomorrow afternoon.

"Swarajyapura" presented an animated scene yesterday, the chief attraction for the thousands of villagers, men,

1. There are no draft reports on the 23rd annual sessions among the documents recovered todate. The item that follows was in the *Times of Ceylon*, 28 December 1941.

women and children, from the neighbouring areas, being the swadeshi exhibition which cannot but impress the visitor of the latent talent of the people of the country.

An attractive pandal spans the entrance to the "City" and on either side are two long sheds housing the exhibits. The Department of Commerce and Industries makes a justifiably boastful display of the products of its coid, twine, mat, textile and pottery factories, while the Department of Agriculture proclaims the results derived from a fertile soil. Private exhibitors are not far behind. The Youth's Social Service League of Jaffna shows the possibilities of paper manufacture and an enterprising young man of Wennappuwa proves the length to which he has gone experimenting successfully with curing ham and bacon and with the preparation of corned beef and corned pork.

Beyond the exhibition grounds is the long row of sheds put up for the delegates. Each shed accommodates 50 and there are ten of them, all complete with beds and other conveniences. There are also ten dining halls each with its own kitchen. The Reception Committee must indeed be congratulated on these arrangements.

Yesterday and today the Congress Associations of Chilaw held their annual conference. Tomorrow afternoon is the presidential procession and the addresses in the open from the rostrum built in the centre of the exhibition grounds.

The Mayor of Colombo, Dr. R. Saravanamuttu, and other prominent Congressmen were present yesterday when Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne performed the simple opening ceremony by cutting a ribbon.

In Free City

"With this ceremony we enter 'Swarajyapura,' the 'Free City'," said Mr. Wijeyeratne. "In this city, built by the Congress we shall talk without fear or favour and we

shall think as we please. It is not because we are not fit to govern ourselves; it is because we are small and weak that we are not free. If we had the power, long ago we would have wrested from our foreign rulers the freedom that is our birthright. It may be that the war in the East will bring to India and Lanka that freedom which British Imperialism still denies to us. Let us by reasoned discussion and endeavour prepare ourselves to use that freedom for the greatest good of the greatest number."

Mr. G. C. S. Corea, who opened the Conference of Congress Associations of Chilaw, referred to the useful work done by them for 18 years. Their sabhas represented the whole district and met once a year. Such annual meetings had been held for the last eight years.

At the present time the Conference had a very important duty owing to the international situation. They must take steps to increase food production. They must help in food control and they must support the authorities to keep peace and order.

He referred to the motion regarding constitutional reform on the programme (it was later passed unanimously) and emphasised the need for a free constitution like dominion status for Ceylon.

"America and Britain are fighting for freedom," said Mr. Corea. "We join them in that fight. We give all the support we can because fighting for them we fight for our own freedom."

A large number of delegates, including Ministers and members of municipal and urban councils, are expected tomorrow. There will be a special bus service from the Bolawatta Railway Station, one-and-a-half miles from "Swarajyapura," which is on the main road to Chilaw.

G. Newspaper Report on the First Day's Proceedings[1]

"No Use of Reforms Commission"
Congress Prefers A Conference

Inviting all sections of the people of Lanka to rally round the Congress banner and march together, arm in arm, to the Congress goal of "a free and independent nation," Mr. G. C. S. Corea, the new President of the Ceylon National Congress, declared open its [23rd] session at Dummaladeniya yesterday afternoon.

On his arrival at "Swarajyapura" with his wife, Mr. Corea was met by the out-going president, Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, the Secretaries, Mr. J. R Jayewardene and Mr. Dudley Senanayake, and the Reception Committee, of which Mr. Peter Perera is chairman.

After hoisting the Congress Flag—of red, yellow and green —while the mixed group of Congress volunteers sang a "national" song, Mr. Corea, who was formally invited to the presidentship, addressed from the rostrum, built in the centre of the grounds, a gathering of nearly 3,000 people of whom 500 were delegates from nearly all parts of the island including Jaffna, although the Northern representatives were but a handful.

The arrangements made for the comfort of the delegates were an improvement on previous years, and they were quite naturally applauding the services of the Reception Committee, whose female element had obviously done much hard work.

A large number of delegates were attired in the costume for which a prize was awarded at the Mirigama session and generally one observed a much greater enthusiasm among them than ever before.

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1. From its "special representative" in the *Times of Ceylon*, 30 December 1941.

The swadeshi exhibition, which was opened on Saturday by Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, continued to attract large crowds who were obviously greatly impressed by the Ceylon products on view. Besides the Departments of Agriculture and Commerce and Industries, there are also among the exhibitors the Ceylon Coconut Board, displaying a wide range of articles from coconut shell buttons to household soap, the Tea Propaganda Board, the Marketing Department and the Health Department. Each of these departments told a story—and a story which, if taken to heart, will go a long way to solve the economic position and the health of the people.

The presence of Mr. D. S. Senanayake, one of the few consistently loyal Congressmen, and some of the past presidents, like Mr. Francis de Zoysa, Mr. G. K. W. Perera, Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya and Mr. Geo. E. de Silva, besides a number of others, like Dr. R. Saravanamuttu, *Mud.* N. Wickremaratne, Mr. Martin Fernando and Mr. J. N Jinendradasa, and even other prominent men, though not in the Congress fold, was an encouragement to the delegates, who had come from afar.

The day's proceedings yesterday ended with the presidential address, but the vast crowd lingered on the grounds until late at night visiting the exhibition and later witnessing a play entitled " Swarajya. " staged by a band of amateurs of Chilaw.

Presidential Address

Mr. Corea, in the course of his presidential address, said: " Patriotism must involve some kind of suffering and self-sacrifice, or at least the subordination of individual interests to those of the community. That is the spirit that must animate us during the coming year. Therefore for the year 1942, I, as your President, can do no better than quote with suitable variation the words of a great soldier to his troops —' I offer neither pay nor quarters nor provisions; I offer hunger, thirst, forced marches and even death. Let him who has the name of Lanka in his heart and not on his lips only, follow me.'

In our own little way we have contributed in men and material to strike a blow for liberty and freedom. We have done this freely and spontaneously because we feel that the defeat of the forces of aggression will mean the triumph of the forces of liberty. We look forward to the victorious end of this war when the peace that will have been won through much travail will usher in a new era of a brotherhood of nations, great and small, all alike, living a free and independent political life.

Therefore, while helping in the war effort we must take steps to prepare ourselves for this freedom. To my mind a very useful step to take at this time is to attempt to prepare an agreed constitution, i.e., a constitution in regard to which the greatest measure of agreement can be secured from all sections of the people. This is no easy task. It requires goodwill and understanding and true patriotism. It also requires a spirit of compromise, not a yielding on fundamental principles but on non-essentials and matters non-fundamental.

Seek Co-operation

For instance one fundamental principle would be the framing of a constitution which will confer the freedom of a Dominion at least. Compromise on a principle of this kind may be impossible, but the question of what is adequate representation for the different areas is a matter on which reasonable compromise will not violate any fundamental principle.

It is indeed a pity that in the past we have allowed people who are in accord on the question of a free constitution to be separated from each other on such a question as the distribution of seats in the State Council. The prolongation of such disputes is inimical to the best interests of the country and steps must therefore be taken to settle this matter early.

One method by which a solution may be found is to seek the co-operation of all shades of opinion in evolving a constitution which would be acceptable to the people of this country, a constitution under which all peoples will have their rights respected, protected and conserved.

In a recent despatch on reforms the Secretary of State stated that what stood in the way of the acceptance of the reform proposals of the Governor which were substantially in accord with the reform proposals of this Congress was the absence of agreement by the minority communities. On a previous occasion the Secretary of State had said that the Ministers were not agreed. Now the Ministers are agreed but the minority communities are not agreed. Therefore there must be a conference or commission to settle the future constitution. There can be no earthly use in having a commission.

Not Afraid of Record

It is not, as some people imagine, that the Congress or the State Council is afraid of the examination of its record. That record is not hidden. It is available in state papers to the Secretary of State and to the public. It is moreover a record which any people might well be proud [of]. The Secretary of State therefore has all the records available to him. More than that, the Governor who had been asked to make a full inquiry and report has, after hearing all shades of opinion, submitted his report. What further use is there in the appointment of a commission? Our decision on that has been made. This Congress will have no part or lot with the work of such a commission.

A conference held by the Colonial Office will be futile, but the idea of a conference is not to be lightly dismissed. Why should we wait till the Secretary of State arranges a conference to settle our differences? We have now gone beyond the stage of asking for reforms. We have reached a stage when we desire to formulate our own constitution. This must necessarily require a conference.

It is therefore up to us to arrange such a conference to draft a constitution, securing for it as much agreement as is possible, and submit it for the acceptance of the State Council. If we did that, we will meet what appears to me to be the one and only objection put forward by the Secretary of State even to the demand for a reform of the constitution. There can be no doubt that this objection is unreal and hollow and of the stereotype pattern, but even that objection it is in our power to meet.

I therefore say that we should meet it and while thus convincing the Secretary of State that an agreement is possible, we will also thereby be definitely securing our own freedom."

Mr. Corea referred to such war-engendered problems as food supply and also to the creation of a Congress fund.

Apathy Deplored

Mr. Peter Perera, in welcoming the delegates, deplored the general degeneracy of the people in the last 100 years which had made them apathetic towards any uplift calculated for them. Young men and women, instead of dedicating their lives to the service of the people, had become slaves to material pleasure.

He paid a tribute to the services of Mr. Corea in the cause of the country and said that it gave the people of Chilaw special pleasure to welcome him as the new president of Congress.

The business sessions began this morning and will be continued until evening. A number of resolutions are on the agenda, the chief among them being one proposing a boycott of the suggested Reforms Commission and another recommending the acceptence of the draft Indo-Ceylon agreement. Others deal with food production, intensification of efforts to establish village industries, trade, and education.

II. Newspaper Report on the Second Day's Proceedings[1]

Congressite Decries Atlantic Charter
Federation With India Mooted

After a four-day meeting at "Swarajyapura," in Dummaladeniya, the 22nd [sic] sessions of the Ceylon National Congress concluded yesterday evening, having passed 20 resolutions, among which was one authorising the Working Committee to prepare for introduction in the State Council an Ordinance repeating the State Council's Order-in-Council and creating a "Constitution for a Free Lanka." For this purpose the Committee was asked to make every effort to secure the widest measure of agreement among the various communities of the country.

Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, proposing the resolution, said "A more callous and more discriminating document has not been published in recent times as the Atlantic Charter. It is infamous that the coloured races which belong to the British Empire should be called upon to participate in a struggle to free the white races of Europe from the thraldom of Hitlerite Germany, without any assurance that those coloured peoples would in turn be given the blessings of complete freedom."

He concluded by appealing to the youth of the country to join forces with the Congress movement, adding that once the new constitution was prepared, in consultation with the Minorities and accepted by the Council, the Congress would insist on the British Government accepting the same, and he envisaged that in the case of failure, a non-co-operation movement would be started, commencing with withdrawal from the Council.

Mr. Siripala Samarakkody, an advocate of federation with India, seconded the resolution, which was supported among others by Mr. P. Givendrasinghe, Mr. L. M. Gooneratne, Mr. P. H. Abraham Silva (who maintained that any claim

1. *Times of Ceylon*, 31 December, 1941.

for a free constitution should be based on the Kandyan Convention of 1815), Mr. Stanley de Zoysa (who blamed Congress for being too slow in going forward), Mr. H. A. Chandrasena, and Mr. Geo E. de Silva.

Mr. Francis de Zoysa, K.C., who recalled the early days of the fight for political rights from the time of Geo. Wall, Lorenz and James d'Alwis, chided those young men who wished to follow the infant's desire to run before it could walk properly. He still regretted the acceptance at the time of the Donoughmore Constitution, and warned against the dangers of federation with India.

Boycott Proposed

Mr. Dudley Senanayake said that in its struggle for freedom, the Congress had hitherto followed the method of Co-operation with the British Government—a method which he had on every occasion opposed—but members, not having given any other mandate, should not blame Congress for not taking "unconstitutional" steps in going forward.

He strongly supported association with India. If the present war had proved anything, it was that small nations could not preserve their freedom without the help of the larger ones. From that point of view association with a larger nation, India preferably because of its geographical position, was desirable but such association should not be one of the ruler and the ruled.

Mr. Gilbert Perera proposed and Mr. P. D. S. Jayasekera seconded a resolution condemning the proposed Parliamentary Commission on reforms after the war and urging its boycott.

Mr. H. A. Koattegoda proposed and Mr. Jotipala seconded a resolution urging the release of the four Sama Samaj detenues.

While Mr. Koattegoda was speaking a Sama Samaj pamphlet making accusations against Congress was distributed in the premises. Mr. Corea (the President) read a

few extracts and wondered how any decent man could descend so low as to utter deliberate and palpable falsehoods when the facts were an open book.

Indo-Ceylon Relations

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene proposed a resolution recommending the acceptance of the draft Indo-Ceylon agreement. He said that the Indian problem had been created by the British who had brought the Indians, firstly to extinguish the Sinhalese and secondly to work on their estates. Eighty per cent of the Indian labourers were estate labourers who had been attracted to this country, by it being painted to them by paid agents of Government as flowing with milk and honey. They could never solve the problem of the Indian labourers until they were a free country. The best thing they could do until they were free was to restrict immigration.

By the draft proposals of the Indo-Ceylon Conference India agreed to accept Ceylon's Immigration Ordinance with a few amendments, and that alone was sufficient to make the agreement acceptable to the people of Lanka. The agreement further not only restricted the voting rights of India [*sic*], it also settled the status of Indians in Lanka and controlled their employment in trade and the professions and it permitted trade talks with Indian in the future.

Nationalist India and the Indian press opposed the agreement on the ground that the agreement " conceded too much to Ceylon, " that the Indian delegates had agreed to the proposals made by the Ceylon delegates at Delhi and that " Ceylon has won their war. " " The Indians in Lanka also oppose the agreement for similar reasons," said Mr. Jayewardene. " Surely then the agreement must even in a small degree be favourable to Ceylon. "

Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa seconded.

" Villains " Questioned

Several members drew the attention of the chairman to the propaganda carried on by a section of the Sinhalese

against the Indo-Ceylon agreement and to the distortion of facts published in leaflets. This led to a number of questions being addressed to Mr. D. S. Senanayake (who along with Mr. Corea had been described as the villains of the piece who had sold Ceylon for half a cent).

Mr. D. S. Senanayake answered every question in detail and Mr. Corea filled gaps left, with the result that the slight opposition that manifested itself at the beginning disappeared, including Mr. Stanley de Zoysa's attempt to defer the discussion of the subject for a special sessions. The resolution was passed unanimously.

Mr. J. A. L. Cooray moved a resolution urging the inclusion in the Congress policy of proposals for the organisation of the economic life of the worker and the peasant to secure for them a decent standard of living, and the introduction of legislation for the provision of all amenities that go to form such decent standards. By another resolution he urged the creation of labour settlements.

Mr. P. P. Siriwardena seconded the resolutions which were supported by Mr. G. H. Albert Perera.

Other resolutions passed urged the "formation of big and small trading organisations with or without Government assistance;" opening of ayurvedic hospitals and dispensaries; the immediate establishment of a residential university in Ceylon; a change in the present system of adult education; that school teachers be permitted to participate in local government politics; the creation of a number of scholarships by the state to enable students to study in industrial, commercial, banking and technical colleges abroad; that the Government grant to the S.P.C.A. be stopped; a census of the population of Ceylon; that a certain portion of the work of the Government as affecting the village population be conducted in Sinhalese or as the case may be; and the early evolution of and more effective policy by the Home Minister control of the Police Department.

Mr. D. S. Senanayake proposed a vote of thanks to the Congress associations of the Chilaw district, for the reception given to the delegates.

I. Appendices to the Twenty Third Annual Sessions

(1) A Political Survey in the Times of Ceylon, 30 December 1941: "Mass Appeal At Last"

As one who was present at all annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress but three, I cannot help observing that this institution for the political progress of the country has at last begun to appeal to the masses.

For many years although it was thoroughly representative of the intelligentsia, that is the English educated intelligentsia, Congress was but a name in the villages.

Early in its career it suffered a great set back from the withdrawal of community after community. Congress was left with only a handful of men. It was dying. It remained in a comatose state for several years. It was almost dead.

Two years ago it again showed signs of life.

Congress has not regained full consciousness. All that can be said of it still is that it is progressing satisfactorily.

If the present treatment and nursing continue there is no reason why, in a not distant future, Congress should not command the full confidence of the people. Of course, one is not totally blind to the possibilities of a relapse, considering the make-up of the previous doctors and nurses.

Personal ambition must be subjugated. Principles and policy should tower above all. Discipline must be maintained, irrespective of personality. Leaders must be prepared to make sacrifices for the common good. Communal and sectional interest must disappear from the programme, not of the Congress, but of the Congress leaders.

Then and then alone will be sections of the people once again consider entering its fold.

The Dummaladeniya sessions which conclude today may be said to be a greater success than the Mirigama sessions of last year, although the attendance might not have been as large as at Mirigama.

Transport difficulties were mainly responsible for this. Nevertheless the attendance was good. The arrangements were good. The general tone was good.

For all this success, the Congress Executive must be congratulated. If I pick out a few names for mention, it is only a random picking: Mr. G. C. S. Corea, Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, Mr. D. S. Senanayake, Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, Dr. R. Saravanamuttu, Mr. Dudley Senanayake, Mr. J. Amaratunga.

In Mr. Jayewardene, Congress had a real leader—sound in political knowledge, firm in principles and prepared for the necessary sacrifices for the greatest good of the greatest number.

Although the Ceylon National Congress today recommended the acceptance of the draft agreement of the Bajpai-Senanayake Indo-Ceylon Conference, the All-Ceylon Village Committee Conference is likely to throw it out at its Nittambuwa sessions.

Elaborate arrangements have been made for this 15th annual sessions which will be held on Saturday. Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike is the president of the Conference. He and his wife will entertain the delegates to tea.

Several important addresses will be delivered at this Conference.

(2) Editorial in Young Ceylon, December 1941: "Ceylon National Congress"

The Dummaladeniya sessions of the Ceylon National Congress was a remarkable success both from a spectacular point of view as also from the standpoint of the tremendous support it is now receiving from the masses. The decision

to hold the annual session in the country, in a town of its own, amidst the palm grooves and paddy fields and in an atmosphere surcharged with national aspirations and the urge for economic freedom, has opened a new chapter in the history of the Ceylon National Congress. It is no longer an association of the English-educated Ceylonese seeking more seats in elected bodies and the larger employment of educated Ceylonese. It is no longer the useful toy of the town-bred English-speaking and billet-seeking local bureaucracy. But there are such tendencies lingering ever vigilant, ever resourceful. They tend to curb the spontaneous evolution of a national purpose. The Congress is at a turning point in its history. The old loyalties die hard and new ones need a surer and firmer footing. Hence much depends on the patriotism and sincerity of those in positions of power in the Congress. Nevertheless a distinct change has come over the Congress. It is seeking ideals not policies, it is pursuing the public good not sectional welfare, it is evolving a national consciousness not for a party or community but for the nation and the people.

The language of discussion is Sinhalese. It has a growing percentage of Sinhalese-speaking citizens—the villager, the goiya, and the tradesman. It has a special appeal to the rural population and the working class movement. To that extent the National Congress is today more eminently constituted to speak on behalf of the people of the country than any other political institution. Much now depends on the leaders at the helm. Will they serve the country no matter the cost of sacrifice ? Will they sacrifice their personal ambition or career for the public weal, will they subordinate themselves to the decision and discipline of the Congress, will its executive be unswayed by influence and undeterred by sacrifice in pursuing steadfastly and unerringly the highest ideals of the Congress ?

(3) An Appraisal By The Political Correspondent Of The Ceylon Daily News, 5 January 1942

What Is Wrong With The Ceylon Congress ?

A Postcript To The Dummaladeniya Sessions

In a little handbook containing the 22nd [*sic*] annual report of the Ceylon National Congress, there occur certain statements which shed a revealing light on the policy and activities of the Congress and the deliberations at Dummaladeniya concluded during the week.

The holding of the annual sessions in December, 1940, at Mirigama was admittedly a departure from the old order. The venue was shifted from the town to the village. By this means it was intended to assign to rural life in Ceylon that importance in the public life of the country which it really occupies but which it had so far been denied by the Congress, and at the same time to enable the leaders of the Congress to come into personal contact with the masses.

Are these aims on the road to achievement today ? Or has the move, repeated this year at Dummaladeniya, only retained the outward characteristic of a gesture without the accompaniments needed to fulfil its objects ?

It is now a matter of history how the Congress, in the short period of ten years from it inception in 1919, began to grow in stature and strength from year to year until it became the most powerful political body in the country and the mouthpiece of a larger number of people than any other political organisation. It continued to exercise this influence in spite of the early "split" among some of its members somewhere about the year 1921, when Sir P. Arunachalam, the first President of the Congress, seceded from its ranks. It reached almost the zenith of its power when the Donoughmore Commission was taking evidence in Ceylon, and it is a fact that many of the decisions of that Commission were mainly influenced by the views then expressed by the Congress.

What were the forces which brought the Congress to this pre-eminent position ? In the first place, [illegible] leaders of that time were real leaders.

money and energy on the political work they had set out to do. They looked upon the Congress as the *one* platform from which they could render the greatest service to the country. They did not look upon a seat in the Council as the be-all and end-all of a Ceylon politician's career.

And secondly, the Congress adhered unswervingly to its principles. It stood up against communalism in any shape or form, whether the communal tendencies were shown in the allocation of seats or in the selection of candidates for Government in various administrative spheres. Adherents of the Congress knew precisely what attitude to take.

The decline of the Congress began when these high principles were flouted ; or rather, when the principles were still loudly proclaimed but no effort was made to see the principles were practised or acted upon.

The handbook I have mentioned above states : "We regret to report that it is not possible to convene meetings of the Congress members in the State Council as these members do not take any interest in these meetings. None of these members were nominated at the elections by the Congress."

It is quite true that the present Congress members of the State Council were not nominated by the Congress at the 1936 elections. But after the elections, the Congress had studiously made the public understand that there was a Congress Party in the State Council. In fact, Congress leaders at one time claimed the homogeneous Board of Ministers as a creation of theirs deliberately set up to further the Congress ideals.

Even at this late stage, it is good to know the truth—namely, that there is no Congress Party in the State Council. The statement I have quoted is signed by Messrs. Dudley Senanayake and J. R. Jayawardene as "Joint Honorary Secretaries of the C. N. C. Party."

It means that the Congress Councillors are *either* unwilling to form themselves into a party, or are indifferent to the value of such an organisation.

There is another curious statement in this handbook. It says: "We have endeavoured to strengthen the party organisation by removing from office those who have been disloyal. We have endeavoured to secure mass support by contesting Municipal and local elections on a party programme........"

It is easy to write in this strain, but why does the Congress conceal the facts? How many disloyal members have actually been removed from office so far? Are they merely removed from office, but permitted to remain as members of the Congress? Why cannot the Congress adhere strictly to certain principles in this matter, and waive aside all questions of persons or their importance when Congress principles are at stake?

For instance, there is the leader of the Sinhala Maha Sabha, Mr. Bandaranaike, who has made it his business to point our how utterly wrong is the Congress policy of today. He is still a member of the Congress.

There is another instance of an ex-President of the Congress who secretly woos other parties and was for some time actively participating in a venture which kept on running down the Congress. I understand that recently he went to the extent of giving his support financially to the Labour Party, which claims to be an anti-Congress organisation.

In the face of these and other instances well known to the Congress leaders, how can the Congress state that it is making an endeavour to strengthen the party organisation by expelling those who are disloyal?

As for the attempt made by the Congress to secure mass support by contesting Municipal and local elections, there is the instance of the Congress Party in the Colombo Municipal Council. Here, it is true that the Congress succeeded in securing considerable mass support at the elections in December, 1940. But it is a moot point whether the Congress members have acted as a party in important Municipal matters.

Instances have been given in these columns where on vital questions affecting the City and the ratepayers the Congress members voted as they liked and were found on opposing sides. Of what value is this Party where individuals were permitted to act as they please in some of the most important questions that came up for discussion in the Municipal Council last year?

What has happened in the Municipal Council is that some of the Congress members are not much enamoured of Congress principles. They joined the Congress, it would appear, as a mere convenience to help them to win their seats.

A number of important resolutions were passed at the Dummaladeniya sessions. If conditions in the State Council are such that the Congress members cannot form themselves into a Party, how can it be expected that these resolutions would be presented to the State Council as part of a party programme?

Among the resolutions passed was a high-sounding call to the people, authorising the Working Committee to take steps for the creation of "a Constitution for a Free Lanka." It requested the Working Committee "to make every effort to secure for this Constitution the widest measure of agreement from among the various communities living in this country."

So the plan is that the Congress will go all out to find the widest measure of agreement and in the process make concessions to the communalists.

The Congress of the pre-Donoughmore period went about its work differently. Men of all communities were attracted by its principles and the unswerving views it held. Then it presented its political demands, which always commanded the respect of the Government. But that method of approach is no longer in favour—thanks to the instability of some of those who constitute the Congress today.

37. TWENTY-FOURTH ANNUAL SESSIONS, 18-20 DECEMBER 1942

A. Programme and Resolutions[1]

"Gamini Matha Pura",
Sri Dharmaloka Vidyalaya Grounds
Peliyagoda, Kelaniya.

Friday 18th Dec. 1942	3 p.m.	.. Judging of Exhibits.
Friday 18th Dec. 1942 ..	5 p m.	.. Opening of the Swadeshi Exhibition.
Friday 18th Dec. 1942 .	5 to 7 p.m.	.. Educational Talks and Film Shows
Friday 18th Dec. 1942 ..	7.30 p.m.	.. National Songs and Dances.
Saturday 19th Dec. 1942 .	10 a.m.	.. All-Ceylon Congress Committee Meeting
Saturday 19th Dec. 1942 .	3 p m.	.. Presidential Procession begins from Victoria bridge
Saturday 19th Dec. 1942 .	5 to 6 p.m	. Address by the Chairman of the Reception Committee and the President.
Saturday 19th Dec. 1942 ..	6 to 7 p.m.	.. National Songs and Dance.
Saturday 19th Dec. 1942 .	7 to 7.30 p m...	Film Shows of Minneriya and Polonnaruwa Industries Schemes
Saturday 19th Dec. 1942	7.30 to 8 p.m...	Variety Entertainment.
Saturday 19th Dec. 1942 ..	8 to 9 p.m.	.. Poets and Writers Conference
Sunday 20th Dec. 1942 ..	9 a m. to 4 p.m.	Business Sessions

The Swadeshi Exhibition continues from the 18th to 20th December.

Office-Bearers for 1943

President :	Mr. P. de S. Kularatne
Hony. Secretaries :	Mr. J. R. Jayewardene Mr. J. A. L. Cooray
Hony. Treasurer :	Mr. H. A. Koattegoda

Chairman of the Reception Committee : Sir D. B. Jayatilaka

Congress Office,
Borella Flats,
Colombo, 16.12.1942.

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1. C.N.A., 60/71 ; a leaflet comprising 4 sheets and 8 pages, printed by the Maha Bodhi Press and containing both Sinhalese and English versions.

Resolutions to be moved at the 23rd [sic] Sessions of the Ceylon National Congress[1]

1. The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that Ceylon's association in a war said to be for democratic freedom, is manifestly contradictory and necessarily ineffective, without a guarantee of that freedom to her. This Sessions therefore calls upon the United Nations to make forthwith, a declaration, guaranteeing to Ceylon, freedom immediately after the war."

2. "Article 1 of the Congress constitution should read as follows: "The object of the Ceylon National Congress is the attainment of freedom for Ceylon."

3. This Session is of opinion that Article 3 (6) of the Constitution should read as follows: "No person who is a member of an organisation, which, in the opinion of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee, is a political party, shall be eligible for membership of the Congress."

4. "This Sessions is of opinion that under Article 5(4) the amount to be sent to the Treasurer of the Congress by Congress associations should be Rs. 5 per year."

5. "In as much as village reorganisation and reconstruction are items on the constructive programme of the Congress the Working Committee is authorised to form an "All-Ceylon Village, Agricultural, Industrial and Marketing

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1. The initial draft on which these resolutions were based can be found in a typescript among the J. R. Jayewardene MSS. The differences are not material except in the instance of resolutions 1 and 2. Under resolution 2 the word "independence" was used originally instead of "freedom." The 1st resolution read as follows:

> This 23rd Sessions of the Ceylon National Congress believes that the success of a War against Nazism and Fascism and Imperialism, can only be achieved by the fullest participation of all free peoples. The United Nations can make this participaton effective, energetic and enthusiastic only when, themselves shedding the taint of Imperialism, assures full national independence to nations under their subjection. This Sessions is therefore of opinion that a declaration should forthwith be made by the United Nations guaranteeing to Lanka freedom immediately after the war.

The resolution has been amended in handwriting which could not be

Development Association. The Working Committee shall have power to raise funds and to perform such acts as may be necessary for the fulfilment of this object."[1]

6. "Whereas the elementary needs of the people, food and clothing, normally difficult and scanty to obtain, have become more scarce and more expensive, this Congress urges the Government to take every step necessary to alleviate the sufferings of the people, by—

(*a*) Intensive cultivation of food crops,

(*b*) Rendering every assistance to peasants to open up new areas in paddy cultivation,

(*c*) Appointment of a Paddy Cultivation Advisory Board,

(*d*) Cultivation by the State or with State-aid of action, and

(*e*) Establishing new industries by the State or with State-aid on co-operative lines to supply the basic needs of the people."

7. "This Sessions is strongly of opinion that immediate steps should be taken to purchase all available private land for distribution among peasants and the landless."

8. "This Sessions urges upon the Board of Ministers the necessity for immediately appointing a Planning Commission to investigate and report on social and economic reconstruction after the war."

[illegible] ote under the title [illegible] was taken from a [illegible] The note reads as [illegible]

Whereas the aim of the Congress is progressive identification with the masses, and whereas village reorganisation and reconstruction is one [illegible]

Marketing Development Association. The said A shall have the power to work for the revival & encouragement of the said industries and for the moral and physical advancement of the villages; and shall have power to frame its own constitution, to raise funds, or to prepare such acts as may be necessary for the fulfilment of its object.

9. "The National Congress urges the Government to transfer to village cultivators after the war, all those allotments of Crown land now given to them for the cultivation of emergency foodstuffs."

10. "The Congress expresses its sympathy with the people of India in their demand for freedom, and urges the British Government to abandon repressive measures and create a free national government in India in consultation with the leaders."

B. Swadeshi Exhibition Advertisement

The Ceylon National *Congress 23rd [sic] Sessions* and Swadeshi Exhibition.

Takes place on 18th, 19th and 20th December 1942, at "Gamini Matha Pura" Sri Dharmaloka Vidyalaya grounds, Peliyagoda, Kelaniya.

Dec. 18th *Friday* : 3 p.m. *Judging of exhibits.*

5 p.m. Swadeshi Exhibition *declared* open by Hon. Mr. G. C. S. Corea, out-going President

5–7 *p.m.* Educational talks and films.

7.30 p.m. National songs and dances competition Folk-songs.

Dec. 19th Saturday : 10 a.m. All Ceylon Congress Committee Meeting

3 p.m. Procession with President-elect starting near Victoria Bridge ;

5–6 p.m. Addresses, 1. Reception Committee Chairman, 2. President-elect ;

6–7 p.m. National songs and dances ;

7–7.30 p.m. Talk on Minneriya and Polonnaruwa Agricultural Schemes by Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake with Films.

8–9 p.m. Poets' and Writers' Conference.

9–10 p.m. Variety Entertainment.

Dec. 20th Sunday : 9 a.m.to 4p.m. Business sessions of the Congress Party.

Swadeshi Exhibition open on all these days.

1. C.N.A., 60/70 ; A single sheet with the advertisement in both Sinhalese and English on one side. The opposite side contains an advertisement in Sinhalese and English concerning a Poets' and Writers' Conference.

C. Prospectus on Swadeshi Exhibition[1]

1. The Swadeshi Exhibition is held during the 23rd [*sic*] sessions of this Congress at "Gamini Matha Pura", Kelaniya on the 18th, 19th and 20th December 1942. This is the third Swadeshi Exhibition held under the auspices of the Congress.

2. The objects of the Exhibition are primarily to make the people of Lanka swadeshi-conscious, to take stock of the natural resources of the different parts of the country, to gauge the material advancement of the people of Lanka in their varied economic activities from year to year, to provide an opportunity for exchange of ideas on trade, industries, agriculture, education, sanitation and other subjects of general interest among the people of the country and generally to create an atmosphere conducive to a cultural renaissance, and a rapid economic progress of the country.

3. Classification will be under the following main sections :—

(i) Raw Materials
(ii) Manufactures
(iii) Rural Industries
(iv) Education
(v) Public Health and Sanitation
(vi) Fine Arts
(vii) Ladies' Section
(viii) History & Archaeology

The groups into which these sections are divided are shown in the catalogue.

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1. The prospectus is printed in a booklet entitled "Ceylon National Congress Exhibition Number 1942" (C.N.A., 60/106b). The booklet has notices and articles in Sinhalese in the first half and notices etc. in English in the second half. It is essentially a binding together, under special cover, of independent pamphlets, notices and reports. It includes the Annual Report for 1942.

4. Opening and Duration of the Exhibition—The Exhibition will be held on the 18th, 19th, and 20th December. The Exhibition will be declared open on the 18th at 4 p.m. by the President of the Congress. It will remain open till 12 midnight of 20th December. For the full programme of sessions see notice.

5. Admission to Visitors—Admission is free for entry into the exhibition grounds; but reservations will be made for delegates and honoured guests. Only ticket holders will be permitted to occupy those reservations.

6. Display and Sale of Exhibits—Exhibits will remain on view during the hours of the Exhibition. This will not prevent an exhibitor from taking orders in the Exhibition, but the actual delivery of the article will not be permitted till the Exhibition is over, unless exhibits could be replaced before delivery.

7. Removal of Exhibits: All exhibits and other exhibitors' goods must be removed from the buildings and grounds within ten days after the closing of the Exhibition.

8. Measures of Protection: (*a*) The Committee will provide for the proper watch and ward of the exhibition buildings and grounds, both by day and night. But it is expressly stipulated that the exhibitors should make their own arrangements for taking care of their exhibits and that in no circumstances can the Committee be held responsible for any loss, shortage, or damage to exhibits or exhibitors' property.

(*b*) Fire Protection: The Committee will undertake measures for fire protection, but they cannot undertake or accept responsibility in respect of injury, loss or damage to persons or property arising from fire or any other causes whatever.

(*c*) Medical Aid: Arrangements have been made to provide medical assistance and first aid on the Exhibition premises.

(d) The Sessions Secretaries shall have the right to expel any person from the exhibition area whose conduct or behaviour is found to be objectionable.

(e) No exhibitor will be permitted to play music or produce any noise in his stall or anywhere in the exhibition premises in such a manner as in the opinion of the Secretaries is a nuisance.

9. Sanitary Arrangements : The usual sanitary arrangements will be made on the exhibition premises. Exhibitors must have their stalls cleaned and refuse removed, at least 30 minutes before the Exhibition is open to the public.

10. A general notice board will be put up at the main entrance and all notifications pertaining to the Exhibition and the various functions will be put up on the board. Announcements will also be made through the microphone.

11. All demonstrations, lectures and cinema shows will be given in the Meeting Hall.

12. All awards will be made on 19th Saturday. The decision of the Committee of Judges will be final and no representations against the decision of the Committee will be considered.

13. Refreshments : Arrangements have been made with "Gaminimatha Cafe" to provide on the exhibition grounds refreshments on payment of scheduled rates. No articles of food, or drink, or smoke, shall be hawked in, or on, any site, building or part thereof within the Exhibition.

14. General : Enquiries for further particulars as well as all communications regarding the Exhibition should be addressed to the Honorary Joint Secretaries, "Gaminimatha Pura," Kelaniya.

T. D. Piyadasa,
D. C. P. Beneragama,
Hony. Jt. Sessions Secretaries.

D. Swadeshi Exhibition Pamphlet[1]

Exhibition & Sessions Committee

Chairman	..	Hon. Sir D. B. Jayatilaka
Vice-Chairman	..	Mr. D. V. Algama
Hony. Treasurer	..	Mr. U. M. Perera
Hony. Jt. Secretaries	..	Mr. T. D. Piyadasa
		Mr. D. C. P. Beneragama

C/o The Congress Office,
Borella Flats, Colombo.

[Hereafter follows a list of the "Rules" and the categories of "Exhibits." Except for minor alterations these remained the same as those applying to the swadeshi exhibitions at the previous annual sessions (*see supra*, items 35 : F. *and* 36 : E). The only additional section was the last item under List of Exhibits. This is printed below.]

25. A special prize contest: Only those who reside in the East and West Siyane Korale where the Congress Sessions and Swadeshi Exhibition will be held can compete for this contest.

Prizes will be awarded according to the Peruwas.

1. Local Assistance Committee who have performed best in agriculture.
2. Volunteer Committees who have performed best in agriculture.
3. The best individual paddy field.
4. The best individual chena cultivation.

(Programmes will be published in due course.)

All correspondence should be addressed to the Joint Secretaries, Swadeshi Exhibition, Congress Office, Borella Flats, Colombo.

1. C.N.A., 60/106b; a gaily coloured pamphlet in English, running to 7 pages, printed by the Lankabhinava Press, Borella.

23rd [sic] Congress Sessions & 3rd Swadeshi Exhibition

Please fill in this form and post to Messrs. Dudley Senanayake and J. R. Jayewardene, Joint Hony. Secretaries, Ceylon National Congress, Congress Office, Borella Flats, Colombo, if you wish to participate in the Exhibition.

24th Congress Sessions & 3rd Swadeshi Exhibition

Name..

Address ....

Peruwa or Korale ....

Name of Exhibit or Exhibits........................

No. in catalogue....................................

Space required ....

Date ....

....
Signature

E. Advertisement re The Poets' and Writers' Conference[1]

We have pleasure in inviting you to the Poets' and Writers' Conference to be held on the 19th instant at 8 p.m. at "Gamini Matha Pura," Kelaniya, under the auspices of the Ceylon National Congress during the 23rd [sic] Sessions of the Congress.

T. D. Piyadasa
D. C. P. Beneragama
Hony. Jt. Sessions Secretaries.

1. C.N.A., 60/70.

SPEAKERS

1.	Julius de Lanerolle Editor Sinhalese Dictionary ..	" Literature as affecting the National Movement "
2.	Dr. K. Kanapathi Pillai ; Ph.D...	" Tamil Literature [English] "
3.	Pandit S. N. K. Bharati [asst. by a Carnatic musician] ..	" Politics in Ancient Tamil Poetry " [Tamil]
4.	Rev. Ananda Sagara ..	" Sinhalese Poems "
5.	Rev. B. Sri Seevali ..	"Progressive Literature "
6.	Rev. W. Rahula B.A. [Hons.] ..	" Some Aspects of Sinhalese Literature "

F. Newspaper Report on The Swadeshi Exhibition[1]

Swadeshi Show Opened

Prelude To Today's Congress Rally

A glimpse of the progress made in recent years in the island's national industrial development can be obtained at the Swadeshi Exhibition, now being held at "Gamini Matha Pura," Sri Dharmaloka Vidyalaya grounds, Peliyagoda. The exhibition, which was the precursor to the 23rd [*sic*] annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress, commencing today was declared open yesterday afternoon by Mr. G. C. S. Corea, Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce.

The All-Ceylon Congress Committee meeting will be held at 10 a.m. today, and the Presidential procession with Mr. P. de S. Kularatne, President-elect, riding on the back of an elephant, will start from Victoria Bridge at 3 p.m. The public meeting will be held at 5 p.m.

Mr. D. S. Senanayake, the Minister of Agriculture and Lands, will deliver a talk, entitled "The Minneriya and Polonnaruwa Irrigation Schemes," at 7 p.m.

The Exhibits

The exhibition attracted a large gathering. The section devoted to paper manufacture was particularly interesting and there were several varieties of paper made locally on show.

1. *CDN*, 19 December, 1942.

The agricultural exhibits from the Udupila Rural Service Centre also attracted much attention. A Health Exhibition and a section devoted to pottery and other art work together with a display of fancy leather hand-bags completed the exhibition.

The following acted as judges at the exhibition: Miss C. Cooray, Mrs. A. E. R. Gunawardena, Messrs. A. H. T. C. Silva, Clement Dias, B. F. Perera, *Mudaliyar* N. Wickremaratne and *Mudaliyar* D. A. Jayatileke.

G. Minutes of the Sessions

A summary of the proceedings of the twenty-third [*sic*] annual seesions of the Ceylon National Congress and the 3rd exhibition held from 18th to 20th December, 1942, at "Gamini Matha Pura," Kelaniya.

Swadeshi Exhibition: On the 18th December at 5 p.m. Mr. G. C. S. Corea, the out-going President, opened the exhibition. From that moment the exhibition was gradually filled up by a large populace.

Talks on Education: Several speakers, including Rev. Bambarande Siri Seevali and Mr. A. H. T. C. de Silva, Inspector of Schools, delivered speeches on education. Mr. H. A. Koattegoda was Chairman of this meeting which concluded at about 7.30 p.m. on the 18th

Variety Entertainment: A variety entertainment was staged on the 18th from 7.30 p.m. together with a national songs competition for school children. The performance ended at about 8 30 p.m.

Presidential Procession: On the 19th December at 3 p.m. a presidential procession accompanied by elephants, Kandyan and Low Country dancers and sesath bearers began at Victoria Bridge and conducted Mr. P. de S. Kularatne, the President-elect. The procession arrived at "Gamini Matha Pura" at 5 p.m. and was met by the members of the Reception Committee and other delegates

Thereafter the President hoisted the national flag while the national song was being sung. He then entered the stage amidst the cheers of the gathering. Mr. D. V. Algama, Vice-Chairman of the Reception Committee, gave a speech on behalf of Sir D. B. Jayatilaka, Chairman of the Reception Committee, welcoming the President and the gathering.

There was a large gathering present, including delegates from branches of the National Congress in various districts in the island.

Presidential Address: The President-elect then delivered his address. The address ended at about 6.30 p.m.

National Songs: A performance of national songs was presented from 7 p.m. to 8 p.m.

New Agricultural Schemes: A two-hour film show on the Minneriya and Polonnaruwa agricultural schemes was screened at 8 p.m. Mr. D. S. Senanayake, Hon. Minister of Agriculture, gave a descriptive lecture on the films.

Poets and Writers Conference: The conference of writers and poets commenced at 10 p.m. with Mr. J. R. Jayewardene in the chair. This meeting ended at midnight.

Business Sessions: On Sunday, the 20th December at 10 a.m. the business sessions of the Ceylon National Congress commenced with the President-elect, Mr. P. de S. Kularatne, in the chair.

The Annual Report of the previous year was printed in the exhibition number. Because it was not printed, the Statement of Accounts was read out by the outgoing Treasurer.

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene moved the 2nd resolution on the agenda. Mr. J. A. L. Cooray seconded. Mr. D. S. Senanayake spoke against the resolution, while Messrs. P. Givendrasinghe, George E. de Silva, Siripala Samarakkody spoke in favour of it. Mr. L. M. Gooneratne raised a point of order and moved that the motion be adjourned as the agenda was

not received in time. The Chairman overruled the suggestion, stating that the motion has been under discussion for a long time. Then Messrs. P. Jamis Silva and Abraham Silva expressed their views against the motion. The motion was carried with only four members voting against it, and the rest voting for.

Mr. Dudley Senanayake moved the 1st resolution on the agenda, seconded by Mr. C P. G. Abeyewardena. Mr. K. B. H. Adikaritilaka made his comments on the motion Thereafter it was carried unanimously.

The Congress adjourned for lunch at 12.30 p.m. and met again at 2 p.m.

When the proceedings were resumed Mr. H. A. Koattegoda moved the 3rd resolution on the agenda, seconded by Mr. G. A. A. Gunatilaka. Mr. D. S. Senanayake moved the amendment to this motion of which notice had been given. Mr. L. M. Gooneratne seconded. Mr. Dudley Senanayake spoke against the original motion while Mr. D A. Jayasinghe spoke in favour of the original motion At this stage Mr. Gilbert Perera said that the members should be given time to consider this matter further and suggested summoning a special meeting subsequently to discuss both the original motion and the amendment. The President placed this suggestion before the house. The house agreed, with only four members opposing.

Mr. J. E. Amaratunga moved the 4th resolution in the agenda and was seconded by Mr. Gilbert Perera. Carried unanimously.

Mr. Gilbert Perera moved the 5th resolution in the agenda. Mr. George E. de Silva seconded. Mr. L. M. Gooneratne moved an amendment of which notice had been given. Mr. S. D. P. Nanayakkara seconded. Only three members voted for the amendment. The original motion was carried.

Mr. U. M. Perera moved the 6th resolution on the agenda. Mr. A. M. Clement Dias seconded. Carried unanimously.

Mr. W I. Lucas Fernando moved the 7th resolution in the agenda, seconded by Mr. S. D. P. Nanayakkara. Carried unanimously.

Mr. J. A. L. Cooray moved the 8th resolution on the agenda. Mr. P. Jamis Silva seconded. Carried.

Mr. H. K. S. Appuhamy moved the 9th resolution on the agenda seconded by Mr. W. Cyril Fernando. Carried.

Mr. Siripala Samarakkody moved the 10th resolution on the agenda. Mr. W. Cyril Fernando seconded. Carried.

Executive Committee of the All Ceylon National Congress: *The election of the Executive Committee for 1943 then took place.*

Distribution of Prizes: The Chairman distributed the prizes and certificates to the winners at the Swadeshi Exhibition.

Mr. U. M. Perera proposed a vote of thanks on behalf of the Reception Committee to the President and the delegates, and for those who had helped to make the sessions and the exhibition a success.

The business of the sessions and the 3rd Exhibition having been concluded to their satisfaction, the participants at the Congress dispersed at 6.30 p.m.

J. R. Jayewardene,
Hony. Jt. Secretary.

H. P. de S. Kularatne's Presidential Address, 19 December 1942[1]

Fellow Delegates and Friends,

Twenty-three years ago at the first session of the Ceylon National Congress, I had the privilege of moving a resolution demanding the establishment of the Ceylon University and it is a matter of particular pleasure to me that you have done me the honour of electing me President of the

1. Based on a paper-backed English pamphlet of 20 pages printed by the Oriental Press, which contains Mr. Kularatne's Presidential Address. See C.N.A., 60/106b. The address was delivered on the first day of the 24th annual sessions.

Congress this year when the object of the first resolution I ever proposed as a Congressman has been realised. The confidence you have placed in me by asking me to shoulder this responsibility is, I consider, the greatest recognition that could have been given to me on the completion of my twenty-five years of Public Service. I am indeed proud to be the President of the Congress held in this historic city of Kelaniya, a city sacred to the Buddhists and a city whose historic importance you have duly recognised by naming the venue for our Congress "Gamini Matha Pura." As a son of the South I am proud to think that it was the South that welcomed your princess whom your people in the days of old gave up to the sea as a sacrifice. I am proud to think that it was the union of this Princess with a Prince of the South that gave to Lanka the great King Gamini who united the country and fought for its freedom and independence. My first duty therefore is to express to you my sincere appreciation of this great honour. I enter on my responsibilities today fully convinced that I have in the performance of my duties the goodwill, the hearty support, and the loyal co-operation not only of my fellow delegates and other members of the different communities of our island, who though at present outside our organisation, are nevertheless equally keen on the object for which this Congress has always stood

I do not want to weary you with the history and the achievements of the Ceylon National Congress. It is sufficient to say that this country owes to the efforts of the Congressmen the constitutional reforms that have been exacted by us from our rulers during the last twenty three years. I do not want to go over the political history of the British occupation of our island and trace the different steps by which we have reached the present stage of our political life, nor do I want to take up your time this evening by an analysis of the weak points of the Constitution under which we are labouring today. All this has been done again and again by my distinguished predecessors and our ably conducted national press keeps us well-informed on this subject.

The Ceylon National Congress came into being for one purpose. Whatever resolutions it may have passed from time to time on various matters of interest and dealing with the many activities of the social and economic life of the island, from whatever points of view its distinguished presidents may have explained its policy and its creed, whether it be that of an England loving product of a residential English University or that of a lover of humanity, peace and freedom, whether they vied with each other in their expressions of loyalty to the British Crown and their determination to live under the British Flag, under-lying all activities of the Congress and the utterances of Congressmen was the aim of the Congress, call it what you will—responsible government, self-government, swaraj, dominion status or independence. The choice of the word depended on two points: when the word was used and who the speaker was.

The first President, Sir P. Arunachalam, the father of the Congress, a son of Ceylon whose memory is revered by us all, in his presidential speech delivered twenty-three years ago said " Many of us are firmly convinced that Ceylon is ripe for responsible government. " But he and his colleagues feared the result of a shock to our ruler if we demanded what we wanted, and asked only for a step, but a substantial step, towards the realisation of this object. They asked for a little and got much less. A step it was that they wanted, but a brick or a stone is perhaps a more fitting description for what they received for their efforts, in spite of, or is it because of, their profuse professions of loyalty.

A few years later we see the Congress at its annual sessions demanding and reaffirming its demand for full responsible government. Some years later, tired of asking for responsible government, the Congress changes the demand to dominion status under the Statue of Westminister.

Today we meet in the midst of the greatest war the world has ever seen. This terrible spectacle is nothing more or less than the utter absolute failure of modern civilization. It is the story of the failure of those who have had the power in

their hands to control and shape the destinies of nations both great and small. We in this island are really mere spectators but by force of circumstances, we, a subject people, find ourselves naturally on the side of our masters.

We are however more than willing to accept the point of view that they, our rulers, with their allies calling themselves the United Nations, are fighting this war, risking the lives of millions, for democracy and freedom, for the protection of the peoples of the world from the rule of 'Herren Volk' of the master races, who wish to destroy "the fundamental freedom and decencies of ordinary men and women and the historic rights of nations."

Hope springs eternal in the human breast. We have girded up our loins and taken courage, and we ask you today to shake off the last traces of servility to be in keeping with the new enlightened spirit of our rulers and ask them for what they and their allies are fighting to grant to the subject races of Europe, namely, independence.

This alone will guarantee that "fundamental freedom and the decencies of ordinary men and women and the historic rights of nations" of which Prime Minister Churchill spoke in his famous broadcast to the British people immediately after signing the Atlantic Charter, soon after the attainment of his enlightenment as a result of his coming in contact with Mr. Roosevelt, the President of the truly freedom loving American people.

Listen to the last words of his talk specially addressed to the subject races of Europe and see for yourself the message he has indirectly sent to you and to me:

> *Do Not Despair.* Brave Norwegians, your land shall be cleansed, not only from the invader, but from the filthy quislings who are his tools. Be sure of yourselves, Czechs; your independence shall be restored. Poles, the heroism of your people standing up to cruel oppressors, the courage of your soldiers, sailors, and airmen, shall not be forgotten. Your country shall live again and resume its rightful part in the new organization of Europe. Lift up your heads, gallant

> Frenchmen; not all the infamies of Darlan and of Laval shall stand between you and the restoration of your birthright. Tough, stout-hearted Dutch, Belgians, Luxembergers; tormented, mishandled, shamefully cast-away peoples of Yugoslavia; glorious Greece, now subjected to the crowning insult of the rule of the *Italian* jackanapes; yield not an inch. Keep your souls clean from all contact with the Nazis. Make them feel, even in their fleeting hour of brutish triumph, that they are the moral outcasts of mankind. Help is coming; mightly forces are arming on your behalf. Have faith; have hope; *Deliverance is sure.*

With a few slight verbal alterations these words could have been addressed to the people of Ceylon by the premier of a friendly freedom-loving country, if there had been any such about 125 to 150 years ago.

Being thus assured of the sympathy of our rulers, feeling that we have only to remind them of something that they seem to have over-looked, the Committee of the Ceylon National Congress ask you to inform the enlightened world today that independence for our country immediately after the war is our goal. There are those who will ask us this pertinent question which they have always asked—"How are you going to protect your country if your present rulers grant you freedom and independence?" We reply "Ask the first Minister of the King." He will tell you how free Norway, independent Poland, stout hearted Holland, Luxemburg, tormented Belgium, glorious Greece, will protect their independence, once the United Nations have freed them from their present master. The British Premier and his people surely cannot care more for these countries than for this island where exploitation of over a century has now been apparently abandoned in favour of a self appointed trust.

Besides, listen to the famous Charter, signed by Roosevelt, the visionary and idealist, and his ardent lieutenant, the imperialist and the First Minister of the British Empire. In Article 3 they state that they respect the rights of

all peoples to choose the form of Government under which they will live and they wish to see sovereign rights and self government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them, in Article 6 they state that after the final destruction of Nazi tyranny they hope to see established a peace which will afford to all nations the means of dwelling in safety within their own boundaries, and which will afford a assurance that all men in all lands may live out their lives in freedom from fear and want. These are brave and noble words which fill us, a subject people, with hope and courage. We wish we could have ended the matter here, for the issue is plain and the settlement of our problems is assured, but unfortunately the enlightenment of Premier Churchill did not last long. In the presence of his American Guru he saw the light just for a little while. That is why our Great Teacher the Buddha has emphasised the importance of continued association with good people Removed from the influence of his Guru, the disciple was overpowered by his old ideas and he soon announced to the world that the Atlantic Charter did not apply to the territories over which he and his Ministers had supreme power. But not so Mr. Roosevelt. He proclaimed his firm conviction that the Charter applied to all humanity. The other great man America has produced is Mr. Wendell-Wilkie. After coming in contact personally with Asia, he told his countrymen fearlessly that they must plan for peace on a global basis, that the world must be free economically and politically and that America must play an active and constructive part in freeing the world and keeping it at peace. He told them also that boasting and big talk left Asia cold, that a new society must be created, free from the economic injustices of the West and the political mal-practices in the East.

We have therefore no doubt as to the point of view of the American leaders, the true champions of freedom in this partner-ship known to the world as the United Nations, but we are more closely and more intimately interested in the views expressed by the representative of the British Empire who signed this Great Charter. When this die-hard

Imperialist Premier has given expression to views which to most people seem to be inconsistent with the ideals for which the United Nations stand, it is usual for another Minister of the Empire to make a speech trying to soften down these imperialistic views by making out that as a matter of fact there is no inconsistency in their policy; but simple folk might well ask: if there was no inconsistency, what was the need for our Mr. Churchill to make the declaration that the Atlantic Charter did not apply to the territories of the British Empire? At the first signs of a turn for the better in the war, we have the same gentleman, while coming out with his "boasting and big talk" of doing his duty, standing up for honour and defending the right, leaving no room for doubt that he is the same old man who called the revered leader of India a 'Naked Fakir' and the same old Imperialist who believes in the idea that he belongs to a Master Race though he condemns Hitler and Germany for believing the same thing of themselves. The difference between them apparently is a matter of degree. In the speech delivered on the occasion of the Lord Mayor's Banquet he says "we mean to hold our own. I have not become the King's First Minister to preside over the liquidation of the British Empire." Now not only does he mean to hold his own, but he wishes to see France free and strong with her colonies gathered around her. Perhaps after the victory, he will even want to give Germany and Italy some sort of empire, for imperialists cannot justify their existence unless there are other empires. As usual, after this speech, another Minister, Lord Cranbourne, found it necessary to make a speech on colonial policy to tell the world what remarkable work had been done by them as trustees of the poor ignorant people who are the natives of these colonies. He wished to convince the world that the proclamation of the resolve to hold what they have was not "synonymous with unrepentent and unregenerate Imperialism." "All Colonial peoples cannot be trained according to the same pattern," says the Daily Telegraph. "In some cases local peoples may be ripe for immediate or early self-government. Others may be so unfitted that we

must be prepared to continue the long and arduous process of political education." I wonder to what category we belong according to our tutors. How seriously our trustees are taking to heart their responsibilities! What arrogance! What conceit! Reading these speeches of politicians and outpourings of journalists, you would think that, according to a deliberate scheme, they have been giving political education to their colonies and some have already been granted self-government, others are ready for immediate or early self-government and the rest is being strenuously prepared for the grant of their freedom. But what are the facts? The history of the old colonies that have become self-governing is well known. The grabbing instinct of British capitalist politicians, even when they were concerned with colonies which were populated by peoples of European origin, was the cause of the loss of the American colonies, which now form the free country of the United States. Even Canada, Australia and New Zealand, with people mostly of European origin, did not obtain their freedom without a struggle. South Africa had to fight a war. Ireland was so badly treated that when she got self-governing institutions, she left the British Commonwealth at the first opportunity. The question before us, therefore, is whether, in spite of the noble sentiments expressed by Britain's spokesmen about their aims in this great war, there is any hope of obtaining without a struggle, from our rulers and other master races, the rights to which we feel we are entitled, the right to live in freedom from fear and want, the right to dwell in safety within our own boundaries, the right to trade freely with other peoples without outside dictation, without quotas and tariffs imposed by authorities not appointed by the people of the country, and, most important of all, the right to choose our own form of Government.

Brothers and sisters, are we asking for freedom and independence on purely sentimental grounds, just because we think it is our birthright or just because we want to be able to raise our heads and look our neighbours squarely in the face as men and women who have a country to call our own? That alone would be sufficient reason. But our position will be clearer if we examine for a moment what foreign

rule means to a subject people. It means exploitation by foreign capitalists and the creation of a similar, but smaller and inferior, group of native capitalists. It means expensive salaries for a large number of foreign officials and lack of employment for the natives. It means two standards of living, the rulers' and the natives'. Some of the natives will live beyond their income, aping the standard of the ruling class, while others will be exploited and have not enough for their bare existence. It means the loss of free trade with other countries. It means the loss of the services of experts from other countries. It means more divisions among the natives: to the high caste and the low, the rich and the poor, will be added language and religious differences and differences in dress. It means the creation and encouragement of a class of people whom we despise as quislings today in Europe, but whom the rulers in all such cases have in the past, just as they do today, honoured and encouraged as loyalists. It means the growth of fear and the degeneration of the characters of men and women. It means a tremendous waste of time and energy of the best brains of these natives, who, discontented with the lot of their people, keep on trying to extort from the rulers a little control over their own country's destiny. It means discontent, resentment and bitterness of feeling. It means a burden which no country can bear or should be expected to bear. It means the loss of the peace of the world. It means bad Karma for the rulers, who have to pay, some time or other, for their sins.

Why is it then that nations have wanted Empires? For whose benefit? Take the average English working man. What does he gain from this Empire of his? He suffers just as other working people do. Unemployment and insufficient wages are his lot too and in the cause of this Empire, he and his sons will come and fight and give up their lives. What a mockery this is! Do the ordinary men and women in Great Britain or any other country with an empire really get compensation for what they have suffered for the conquest and maintenance of the Empire? The only people as far as I can see who want Empires are the ruling castes and the capitalists in these countries. The great American leaders have

recognised once and for all that the peace of the world is at stake if empires exist. There will be no peace in the minds of men and among the nations so long as there are subject races. For the sake therefore not only of the subject races but also of the master races—the "Herren Volk" as Mr. Churchill calls them—the United Nations must see to it that, when this war ends, the world will have done with this primitive conception of colonies.

"We are fighting for something," says Mr. Churchill which is greater than country. "That is the cause of freedom and justice " But, Mr. Churchill, the world is not convinced. We honestly feel owing to the manner in which we are treated that your fight is a fight for power, for existence as a master-race. You really have no love for humanity in Europe or elsewhere. You only love your own kith and kin.

But there are and there must be, I am sure, Englishmen and women who are fighting this war for freedom and the cause of justice. There are men and women who are risking their lives and the lives of their sons for what they think to be a great cause. Is it necessary to tell such honest and intelligent British men and women that the cause has no great significance to us as we are placed today ? Do they expect us, subject races of the British Empire, to fight to obtain freedom and justice for the peoples under the Nazi yoke today, because we are in a better position to sympathise with them? There are none so blind as those who will not see. What is it that we are fighting for? In Europe to obtain freedom for the subject races of Europe, in America, to protect the French colonies for the French Empire and to prevent the German master-race from becoming too powerful and getting hold of the sea routes, in Ceylon and India to prevent a change of the master-race. Is that a correct analysis and if so, are we satisfied? Even Hitler assures France that he will see that she gets her colonies back. These men are undoubtedly birds of the same feather.

We have been quite frank and we tell our rulers that they cannot fool us all the time. We are a helpless and powerless people. They can afford to be quite frank with us and tell us "we mean to have you under subjection as long as we can." We shall then know where we stand.

worse fate—a change of masters—this to some of your people appears to be sufficient reason for our hearty co-operation in this war. It does not strike us in the same way. We notice that your Ministers in England are prepared to offer dominion status and independence to those who give them trouble. Are our loyalty and our powerlessness the obstacles in our case ?

A man once went to propose to a woman after having wooed her for many years. Having met the lady, instead of proposing he inquired from her whether she loved him. The answer was satisfactory. Then he said "That is all right. I can afford to wait." Is it that you have had a satisfactory answer from our people and therefore you can afford to wait in our case. That is not justice nor is it fair play. Or, can it be that you honestly think that the people of this country are not fit to govern themselves ? Is there such a thing as fitness to govern oneself except in the case of an individual. Who has the right to judge in the case of a nation ? Shall we allow Germany, Italy and Japan this same right to judge the fitness of other nations to govern themselves ?

We are a poor people. There are malaria, floods, mal-nutrition, tuberculosis and various other maladies which require our immediate attention. We cannot afford the high expenses of foreign rule. The cost of our representative to India is on a European scale, because neither India nor Ceylon has swaraj. We had to pay because we knew he could not manage on less. This is merely to give you an illustration. One of you has been giving good and sound advice to our people on the subject of economy, but advice is not enough where there are so many bad examples.

Here is a great opportunity for you to do your duty by the people fearlessly and honourably, not looking at it from the point of view of your country but of humanity as a whole. Can you not develop the Roosevelt and Wilkie spirit in looking at this question ? It does not matter

whether your masters in London accept your recommendation or not. I hope that God, in whom you put your faith, will give you the courage to do the right thing by the people of Lanka.

Our Ministers, we know, have unitedly asked the King's Ministers through you, for a declaration that dominion status will be granted to this country immediately after the war. Have you stood by us, or will you and the Ministers of the King compel us to use the words of a distinguished past president of the Congress—"to hang our harps on the willow trees, sit by the waters of our Babylon and weep and sing our song. Not to the music of Hebrew Psalmody or Vedic Hymnal, not to the material strains of Caledonian bagpipes or even to the softer strains of Ireland's harps, but to the discordant notes of England's broken melody we shall sing our song of lamentation—and this shall be its refrain: England, oh, England, the land of Cromwell and Thomas Payne, [*sic*] the land of Wilberforce, the land of John Bright, of Gladstone and of Charles Bradlaugh, the land of the Free that thou once wert, England, oh, England, *how hast thou fallen from thy high estate!*"

To our European friends in Ceylon, I say, you have lived in our midst and have come to know us. You have made fortunes in this island. I know that some of you foolishly fear that we will drive you out of this country the moment we are free. Is your fear reasonable? The great might of England is there to protect you. Are you going to be a thorn on our side, or stand by us and tell your countrymen in England that you feel ashamed to find that you are fighting for the freedom of other subject races while living in the midst of a people who have not been given their freedom.

To our Indian friends across the seas, the Ceylon National Congress sends its greetings in their hour of suffering. We feel convinced that India and Ceylon must in the years to come draw nearer together in friendly ties of neighbourly co-operation.

21—K 19798 (75/03)

To our Indian friends here, I say, that I have personally never had in my mind any difficulty about their position in Ceylon. To those who have a genuine desire to become Ceylonese, to become one with the people of Ceylon, my only question is do you honestly feel that you are Ceylonese? Have you during your stay in Ceylon given proof that you have come definitely for the purpose of settling down in Ceylon, or are you among those who have one foot in Ceylon, and both feet in India?

While I claim for my country the right to control its population by restricting immigration, I personally would welcome as Ceylonese all those now in Ceylon who are genuine in expressing their wish to be Ceylonese and who can give sufficient evidence to support their claim.

I say to them however, "Do not claim privileges as British subjects for we are all of us working for our freedom."

To my countrymen the Ceylonese I say, "Join the Congress if you accept our creed. There is nothing in the Congress to prevent your pressing your point of view about the constitution that free Ceylon should have." I would appeal to those who belonged to the Congress and have left for various reasons to rejoin the Congress. Its members are trying to work and act strictly in accordance with its constitution. If you are agreed on our goal, there is room within the Congress for your point of view. There is a problem called the minority problem. To me, a Ceylonese, there is no such problem and there can be no such problem to any one else who has made himself one with the people of the country. A few seats given to a community can make no appreciable difference to the welfare of that community. We must not create disunion for the sake of personal ambition. But if there are minority communities which for any reason feel the need of special protection, the Congress, I say, has always stood for the safeguarding of the interests of such communities. But I would appeal to all Ceylonese to consider the situation seriously, and act in the best interests of the country as a whole. Unity is essential.

Confidence in each other is necessary for this unity. During the coming year I shall devote all my energies to removing misunderstanding, creating confidence, and bringing about that united action which alone will enable us to attain our goal. I feel certain that in this effort I shall have the help of all Ceylonese who love their country and their fellow-countrymen.

I. Newspaper Report on the Business Sessions, 20 December 1942

Creation of Distinctions Deplored
Appeal To Congress Party

"I appeal to you most earnestly, as one who has worked for the country and the Congress for the last twenty years, not to proceed with the creating of distinctions. This may, perhaps, be the last time I am speaking to yoy," remarked Mr. D. S. Senanayake in the course of an impassioned speech at the Ceylon National Congress sessions at Kelaniya yesterday, opposing a resolution for shutting out from Congress those belonging to other political parties.

"If you go on creating such distinctions nothing will be left us," he continued. "Fix your aim on your main object, the attainment of freedom, and leave these minor matters out. You who are prepared to go not to the British but to the United Nations, now want to send only members of your Party to the State Council. When people get old even the parents are forgotten. The way the wind travels can be seen from the branches of the trees. I cannot continue to be a member of your Executive Committee because your ideas are so different from mine, but I may be a member."

Mr. P. de S. Kularatne, the new President, presided over the business sessions which began at 9 a.m. at the Sri Dharmaloka Vidyalaya, Kelaniya.

1. This report is derived from the *CDN*, 21 December 1942. The report ends with two paragraphs which provide a brief summary of Mr. Kularatne's address on the 19th. These we exclude. It is also stated that a poets' and writers' conference was held on the 19th.

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene proposed:

Article 1 of the Congress constitution should read as follows: The object of the Ceylon National Congress is the attainment of freedom for Ceylon.

Mr. Jayewardene said there was no such thing as dominion status. That view was supported by the recent speeches of Lord Samuel and the Lord Chancellor Simon in the House of Lords. In the recent debate on India, Lord Samuel said: "The phrase Dominion Status is meaningless and should be dropped." The Lord Chancellor agreeing with that "deprecated the use of the word dominion." Dominion status was not a boon that could be granted by a ruling race to a subject race, continued Mr. Jayewardene. Two free countries could agree to treat each other as dominions; their freedom was not a thing that could be given by one to another, it was a state which emerged out of the toil, devotion, patriotism and idealism of the people who were going to be free.

Mr. J. A. L. Cooray seconded.

What Change Would Mean

Mr. D. S. Senanayake said that according to their existing constitution Article 1 stated: "The object of the Ceylon National Congress Party is (*a*) the attainment by the people of Ceylon of dominion status within the meaning of the Statute of Westminster, (*b*) the social and economic development of the country as outlined in the policy and program of the Congress Party."

By the proposal their second object, which was extremely essential, would be eliminated.

What was meant by dominion status was defined in the Statute of Westminster and they need not go to what was said in the course of a heated debate in the House of Lords. They should realise that while some countries had waged war for their freedom, other countries had struggled by peaceful persuasion to exert their claim for recognition as a self-governing nation.

The change they sought to make in the constitution of the Congress would only tend to increase the differences among the people.

Mr. P. Givendrasinghe said that the youth of the country wanted now to take the lead and lead it aright. Men's ideas changed as they climbed the ladder of fame and as new prospects opened out to them.

Mr. D. S. Senanayake objected to the statement. Mr. Givendrasinghe said that he did not make any personal reference. The President said that he would not allow any personal references.

Mr. Geo. E. de Silva said that he disagreed with Mr. D. S. Senanayake's statement that by their asking for the freedom of the country they would neglect the social and economic development of the country. Freedom, on the other hand, would expedite such development.

Mr. L. M. Gooneratne said that by accepting that resolution they would be acting contrary to the resolutions adopted at the last two sessions of the Congress, when they asked for dominion status.

Mr. Siripala Samarakkody said that there was no system of government known as dominion status.

The Board of Ministers had also made representations to the Secretary of State, but he did not know with what result. They knew why the Ministers took up a different attitude in that matter. One Minister had recently made a statement and when the Governor called upon him to explain he instantly withdrew it. That was why the Minister sang a different song now.

Objection to Remarks

Mr. D. S. Senanayake : "The President has stated that he would not allow such remarks to be made."

Mr. Samarakkody then withdrew the statement and appealed to the assembly to support the resolution.

Mr. P. Jamis Silva and Mr. P. H. Abraham Silva opposed the resolution.

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene in reply said that practical steps had been taken by several of the affiliated associations of the Congress to promote the social and economic development of the country. If dominion status and freedom meant the same thing why should they not adopt the word "freedom."

Mr. D. S. Senanayake: "If it is the same, why do you want a change unless there is something behind it?"

Mr. Jayewardene said that he wanted that change because Congress should be honest in its professions.

The resolution was then passed, only four opposing it.

Mr. Dudley Senanayake proposed:

"The Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that Ceylon's association in a war said to be for democratic freedom, is manifestly contradictory and necessarily ineffective, without a guarantee of that freedom to her. This sessions, therefore calls upon the United Nations to make forthwith a declaration, guaranteeing to Ceylon, freedom immediately after the war."

Mr. C. P. G. Abeyewardena seconded. Carried.

Congress then adjourned for lunch provided at St. Paul's school by the Congress Branch at Kelaniya.

Mr. H. A. Koattegoda proposed, on resumption of proceeding after lunch:

This sessions is of opinion that Article 3 (6) of the constitution should read as follows: "No person who is a member of an organisation which in the opinion of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee is a political party shall be eligible for membership of the Congress."

Mr. G. A. A. Gunatilaka seconded.

An Amendment

Mr. D. S. Senanayake proposed the following amendment:

> Any person who subscribes to the Congress creed shall be eligible for membership regardless of the fact that he may be a member of any other organisation concerned with political or other matters.

Mr. Senanayake said he was one of the members of the Congress from its inception One of the aims of the founders of the Congress was to achieve freedom for the country. If the Congress proceeded on the lines on which it was proceeding now it would only succeed in producing more noise. They might say that because he had come to some position his ideas had changed. That was not so. He carried on his work not to win the plaudits of anyone but because he was convinced that he was promoting the progress of the country and its people. He regretted that he may not be able to work any longer in the Executive Committee of the Congress.

It had been said there that because of the old ideas of old people their progress was hindered. Although he was old he could work with any young man even physically. Mr. Jayewardene had said that his idea was to depart from the British. His (Mr. Senanayake's) idea was to work with the British for their freedom. Therefore, while wishing them every success so that the country may be benefitted by their efforts, he would retire from their Executive Committee. There were many sections in Ceylon. Was it their idea to shut them out and obtain freedom only for the Congress? The founders of the Ceylon National Congress were never prepared to work as a Party because they felt that it would ruin Congress. What they wanted at this stage of their development was not to multiply the distinctions that existed but to work harmoniously. Mr. Senanayake concluded with the remarks mentioned earlier.

Mr. L. M. Gooneratne seconded the amendment.

Kotte at about the same time Mr. Kularatne was declaiming at Kelaniya. Mr. Perera's remarks had reference to the suggestions made not once but repeatedly, that Christian Sinhalese are not true Sinhalese.

The discussion on the motions at the sessions showed clearly enough the futility of the Congress trying to organize itself as a political party. Every attempt to do so has failed for a variety of strong reasons. No clearly marked political cause or theory differentiates the Congress from other similar bodies. It has no effective party machinery making it worthwhile for political candidates to use for its support. Above all it entirely lacks principle or conviction, rendering it impossible for it to enforce party discipline. After the exposure of its methods at the recent Moratuwa by-election and its sequel, the Congress would be wise to abandon its pose as a political party. In that case has the Congress any justification to exist at all? We can see only one reason for its prolonged existence—if it should succeed in abandoning its past narrow communal creed and use such influence as it has in furthering inter-communal concord and national unity. Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike, one of its past presidents, was developing his Sinhala Maha Sabha on strongly communal lines, till the war put a stop to his activities for the time being. The Congress did nothing to counteract his communalism because it was tinged with the same virus. If now the Congress could revert to the creed of its founder and work for a united Ceylonese nation it might reasonably demand freedom and would no doubt get it. There is no other way.

(2) Ceylon Communist Party's "Appeal to the Patriots of Lanka in the Name of National Freedom," 19 December 1942.[1]

The 23rd [*sic*] annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress will commence today at Peliyagoda. A tremendous war cry for freedom will be heard today throughout

1. Translated from a leaflet (4 pages) in Sinhalese (C.N.A. 60/35a). The leaflet was printed at Lanka Press, Rajagiriya. I am grateful to Mr. P. G. Karunasiri for assistance in translating this document.

Lanka, a cry which will surpass all the movements for freedom that emerged since the heroic fight of Gongalagoda Banda and Purang Appu in 1848. Mother Lanka is today facing a dangerous situation in being subject to the threat of a Fascist invasion. In this hour of gloom, all the patriots are looking earnestly at the National Congressmen who meet today at this critical and crucial moment in which we are destined to deal with the most important problem for our nation—the struggle between Life and Death. From it's inception in 1920, the Ceylon National Congress declared it's sole aim to be that of securing complete freedom. Between 1925-1929 the National Congress directed it's struggle to a certain extent towards winning the rights of the people. However, in 1929 it appeared that the Congressmen had divourced themselves from the large mass of people and compromised their objectives when they accepted the Donoughmore constitution and followed a policy that is described by the phrase : "we are satisfied with what we have received." What a crime they committed at such a tender age! Not only that. The leaders of the Congress did not stop there. They broke away from their widowed mother, the people of Ceylon, and ceded the National Congress to the imperialist authorities.

The Sports Club of the Owners of Coconut Estates : From that day onwards the decline of the Ceylon National Congress commenced. It was divorced completely from the mass of people and becames the plaything, the club, of the coconut estate owners. Even the words "national freedom" "organisation," etc, appeared to be strange words to them. Distrusting their fellow brethren, they sought the assistance of the imperial authorities and the European planters.

While the Indian National Congress was carrying on a struggle for freedom with great devotion, our Congressmen had as their sole political objective the attempt to distribute the seats in the State Council between a few families. When the Indian leaders who fought for their freedom were going to jail, our leaders were making pilgrimages to No. 10, Downing Street with petitions. Turning into the puppet of the imperialists, our leaders scorned patriotism and

nationalism. They remained silent when the imperialists seized the civil rights of the people one by one. They opposed comrade S. A. Wickremasinghe, the only Communist member in the last State Council, when he spoke on freedom. While the nation was stumbling down the path of decline day by day, hour by hour, they enjoyed themselves together with the imperialists, attending balls. At this time nobody accepted this Congress as a political party. In the general elections of 1936, in virtually every constituency, members of the Congress contested each other. In short, there remained only the name of the Congress.

The New Era: However a somewhat brighter period dawned after 1939. The situation improved slightly when a few young, progressive patriots with ideas of freedom joined the Congress. These young men realised that the policy of the Congress should be channelled towards attainment of freedom rather than that of dominion status.

From this stage onward the Congress faced a great storm. As a result of the organised actions of these young patriots, the Congress began associating again to a certain extent with the people. But these young members were not completely successful in destroying the die-hard opinions of the old leaders. The Congress leaders did not present a single proposal regarding freedom. The only valuable example that these leaders took from the Indian National Congress was to initiate an annual subscription fee so that the ordinary citizen also could become a member of the Congress. While they were reluctant to copy the commendable practices of the Indian National Congress, the only idea they borrowed was the useless practice of holding the annual sessions in villages rather than in cities. Unfortunately the Congress was defeated at every election it contested during this period. Not merely that, the chief leaders of the Congress split into separate groups and worked against each other during these contests. However, due to the agitation of the young patriots, discipline was

maintained to a certain extent. Be that as it may, the Congress neither broke completely with the imperialists nor associated fully with the people.

The Time Has Come Today : Today we appeal to the patriots in the National Congress in the name of national unity. What should be done by us today is not merely the adoption of resolutions demanding freedom after the war and sending those resolutions to the imperialists. We cannot trust the assurances given by imperialists. Mahatma Gandhi said that the promise to grant freedom after the war is like issuing a post-dated cheque from a bankrupt bank. We cannot place confidence in these imperialists. We should place our confidence in partriotic citizens ; and in our own steady determinaton.

Sever the Connections with Imperialists : We appeal again to our fellow patriot members of the National Congress at this historic movement. Fellow patriots, today Mother Lanka has reached a stage of the most frightening seriousness. With the steadily advancing threat of Japanese Fascist invaders we, too, are faced with great danger. At this fateful hour, the imperial authorities are playing with our fate and destiny in order to darken the brilliant future of our country, our fellow citizens, and our nation (race).[1] This great gamble with our motherland and our race (nation) should be stopped immediately. Patriots of the National Congress! force your Congress to sever the connections with the imperialists.

This does not mean that all the Congressmen should resign from the State Council or from local bodies. Our aim should be to assist the imperialists in every effort they take against the Fascists which might strengthen the defence of our country ; and [on the other hand] to oppose (boycott) every action taken by them against our people. For instance, we should bear in mind such incidents as the

1. The word "jatiya" could mean either "race" or "nation." In the 1940's (and even today) it was used in both senses.

imprisonment of patriots, with Revd. Udakandewela Saranankara prominent among them; and the oppressive law which prohibits meetings.

Freedom! In which Way?: Let us consider the next step that you should take. You must put forward a programme including a genuine policy of attaining complete national freedom. The war being fought today is a people's war. The war is being fought between the Facist band of rogues and the allies of the United Nations who are opposed to aggression. The sole issue which confronts us today is either slavery under the Facists, or freedom. If our aim is directed towards attaining freedom, then we should launch an effective struggle against the Japanese invaders. Some patriots maintain that "We can fight effectively only after gaining independence." This may be a true opinion if the Japanese do not intend to attack us. But unfortunately it would not happen that way.

We should launch a struggle to gain our freedom. It is our duty to protect the motherland from our enemies. Imperialists and their officials are not capable of defending our country. Imperialists are not patriots. Only patriots can defend their motherland. We are not alone in this struggle. We have powerful friends. Soviet Russia, China, Mexico, the Indian, British and American peoples, are with us in the struggle. We can carry on this great struggle only by building up a united national front separated from the imperialists and based on national integrity.

Towards National Unity: National Congress patriots gathering together at Peliyagoda today, you are faced with a great responsibility. Organise a movement that it truly directed towards the wind of freedom, separate the Congress from the imperialists, and make it a true, "national" Congress in every letter of the word "national." Break away from the imperialists and join hands with the people and patriots. Build up national unity. It is then only that we could build up a free Lanka in a free world by

driving away to the east the Fascist wolves who are coming to swallow our motherland, and driving away to the west the imperialists who enslave us at the moment. An united conference of Patriots will be held on the 25th and 26th at Polgahawela to discuss these important issues. Today, we are looking in earnest at the Peliyagoda sessions.

Reproduced from "Janashakthiya," weekly journal of the Ceylon Communist Party.

The United Conference of Patriots speaks to you on the 25th and 26th of this month at Karandeniya School, Polgahawela.

38. SPECIAL SESSIONS, 28 AUGUST 1943

A. Circular Note re Special Sessions, 31 July 1943[1]

Congress Office,
Borella Flats,
Colombo, 31st July, 1943.

Dear Sir,

A special sessions of the Ceylon National Congress will be held at the Town Hall, Colombo, on Saturday, the 28th August commencing at 10 a.m. Under Article 9 of the constitution, only delegates to the preceding sessions held at Kelaniya in December 1942 can take part in the proceedings. All members of the Congress are however invited to attend the sessions. The following subjects will be discussed:

1. "The Ceylon National Congress, whilst expressing its dissatisfaction with the Declaration of His Majesty's Government on Constitutional Reforms, and whilst reaffirming its demand for freedom after the war, authorises Congress members in the State Council to support a constitution drafted in accordance with the interpretation given by the Board of Ministers to the declaration, provided that such a constitution is accepted and implemented by the State Council."

2. The question of admitting members of other political parties as members of the Congress.

3. Amendments to the constitution of the Congress.

A Meeting of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee will be held at the Town Hall on the same day at 9 a.m.

N.B.—Yoy were a deligate to the Kelaniya sessions. The delegates will be provided with lunch.

Yours truly,
J. R. Jayewardene,
J. A. L. Cooray,
Jt. Hony. Secretaries, C.N.C.

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1. C. N. A., 60/35; a one-sheet leaflet with the Sinhalese version on the other side.

B. Minutes of the Sessions

A summary of the proceedings of the special sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held on the 28th August, 1943, at 10 a.m. at the Town Hall, Colombo. About 150 members attended the meeting. Mr. P. de S. Kularatne, the President of the Congress, was in the chair.

Presidential address: The President explained the purpose of the meeting.

Motion on Constitutional Reforms: Having concluded his address, the President moved the following motion:

The Ceylon National Congress, whilst expressing its dissatisfaction with the Declaration of His Majesty's Government on constitutional reforms, and whilst reaffirming its demand for freedom after the war authorises Congress members in the State Council to support a constitution drafted in accordance with the interpretation given by the Board of Ministers to the above declaration, provided that such a constitution is *accepted and implemented by His Majesty's Govern*ment within a reasonable time of its acceptance by the State Council.

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene seconded.

Mr. D. C. P. Beneragama moved that all the members present should be allowed to participate and vote at this sessions. Mr. P. Galoluwa seconded it. The Chairman refused to permit this but was willing to allow two members to speak on behalf of the non-delegates. Mr. P. Galoluwa moved that the motion should be postponed to be discussed at the annual sessions in December. After Mr. D. C. P. Beneragama seconded this suggestion, Messrs. D. A. Jayasinghe and Anagarika Dharmapriya spoke in favour of it.

Mr. D. S. Senanayake stated that as the motion before them concerned a very important issue regarding the future of Ceylon, its postponement till December might not give Congress the opportunity of even considering it. Dr. S. A. Wickremasinghe said that, speaking for himself, he

altogether disapproved of accepting this type of reform sent out by Whitehall, but he wished to support the proposal to postpone it until the next annual sessions in order to allow them to accept or reject the resolution according to the wishes of all the Congress members. Mr. P. Givendrasinghe also spoke in favour of the postponement.

The proposal to postpone the motion was put to the house first and was defeated. Thereafter, the discussion commenced on the original motion. Messrs. Dudley Senanayake, N. Wickremaratne, George E. de Silva, J. R. Jayewardene and P. Jamis Silva spoke in favour of the motion. Messrs. D. A. P. Kahawita, P. Galoluwa, D. Peter Perera, D. M. Manoratne, Louis Aryasinghe, D. C. P. Beneragama, spoke against it. Then the motion was put to the house and was carried with 44 members voting in favour and 12 voting against.

Since the time had reached 1 p.m., the meeting was adjourned for lunch. On resumption of the proceedings at 2 p.m., Mr. D. C. P. Beneragama pointed out that the meeting was unconstitutional as no quorum was present. While the counting was in progress more entered; the quorum being effected, the proceedings commenced.

Article 3 (6) of the Constitution: Mr. H. A. Koattegoda moved the following motion, a resolution which had been postponed at the annual sessions held at Kelaniya.

> This session is of opinion that Article 3 (6) of the constitution should read as follows: "No person who is a member of an organisation which in the opinion of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee is a political party, shall be eligible for membership of the Congress."

Mr. Gilbert Perera seconded.

Mr. D. S. Senanayake announced that though he had given notice of an amendment regarding this motion at the Kelaniya annual sessions, he did not wish to move it at the moment. Furthermore he added "The Ceylon National Congress should not function as a political party. I do not

wish to oppose this motion because after careful consideration of the question I hope to express my views at the next annual sessions."

Mr. G. C. S. Corea spoke in favour of the motion, and Messrs. Kuruwita Gunasekere, D. A. Jayasinghe and P. Givendrasinghe opposed it. Mr. D. C. Liyanage also received permission to express his views.

The proceedings of the day ended with the passing of the motion.

(Unsigned)
President.

J. A. L. Cooray,
J. R. Jayewardene,
Joint Hony. Secretaries.

C. CEYLON DAILY NEWS REPORT ON THE SESSIONS[1]

Congress and Reforms

Support for Ministers' Policy

A resolution re-affirming the demand for freedom after the war and supporting a constitution based on the Reforms Declaration by the Secretary of State (as interpreted by the Board of Ministers) was passed at a special session of the Ceylon National Congress held at the Town Hall on Saturday.

Mr. P. de S. Kularatne, President, occupied the chair. Only delegates to last year's Congress session held at Kelaniya were entitled to take part in the proceedings. Mr. D. S. Senanayake, Mr. G. C. S. Corea, Mr. George E. de Silva and Mr. George R. de Silva were among the delegates present.

Working Committee's View

Mr. Kularatne said that he did not want them to think that the Working Committee considered the Declaration of the Secretary of the State or the Constitution which was

1. *CDN*, 30 August 1943.

going to be drafted by the Board of Ministers as the attainment of their object. "They affirmed in no uncertain terms that they would not rest content until they had achieved complete freedom," he said.

"A constitution drafted in accordance with this Declaration cannot satisfy any freedom-loving people," he continued. "What does this Declaration tell us? It says that His Majesty's Government is too busy with the war to worry about our constitutional reforms just now. However they wish to show their appreciation of the contribution to the war effort which Ceylon has made and is making, and of the co-operation which they have found in Ceylon under the leadership of the Board of Ministers and of the State Council."

So they devised a plan to keep the Board of Ministers and the State Council busy till the war was over. They outlined the rules for a new game, namely the game of constitution framing and said: "Probably, this will keep the fellows quiet." The Board of Ministers, however, were not prepared to play that game without going into greater details about the rules of the game. He hoped His Majesty's Government, when the time came, would play the game by them.

The Declaration did attempt to create in them a feeling that they were to be partners of a Commonwealth and it did admit that this country was needed by this Commonwealth for its security. He felt that in all fairness the Commonwealth should pay them compensation for the use that it proposed to make of this country for defence purposes. He could not understand why other parts of this Commonwealth should not have been allowed to deal directly with them without any control by His Majesty's Government.

Mr. Kularatne then, on behalf of the Working Committee, moved the reforms resolution. Mr. J. R. Jayewardene formally seconded the resolution which was as follows:

> The Ceylon National Congress whilst expressing its dissatisfaction with the Declaration of His Majesty's

Government on Constitutional Reforms, and whilst reaffirming its demand for freedom after the war, authorises Congress members in the State Council to support a constitution drafted in accordance with the interpretation given by the Board of Ministers to the above declaration provided that such a constitution is accepted and implemented by His Majesty's Government within a reasonable time of its acceptance by the State Council.

Talk of Non-Co-operation

Mr. P. Galoluwa proposed and Mr. C. P. Beneragama seconded an amendment to the effect that consideration of the resolution be deferred till the annual sessions in December. Mr. D. S. Senanayake said it was a vital question for the country and the National Congress existed to deal with such a question. If they deferred the matter till December they might not get the opportunity of discussing it. The amendment was put to the House and defeated.

During the discussion on the original resolution, Mr. Dudley Senanayake said that any dispute amongst them was as regards the means of achieving their common end, namely, freedom. One section advocated non-co-operation as the means of achieving it, the other thought that the circumstances did not allow them to launch such a movement. The people who wanted non-co-operation criticised the Congress as not being a representative body. It surprised him to see that those very people wanted Congress to launch a non-co-operation movement, while at the same time they desired co-operation in the war effort to resist Fascist aggression. He reminded them that they had not opposed Congress working the present constitution. But they did not want Congress to accept a constitution giving more freedom even if it were given immediately. He did not see the logic of that position.

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene said that the Congress stood for the fullest freedom after the war. If they were not free, ways and means must be devised to secure that freedom.

Resolution Passed

Replying to a point raised by one of the delegates, Mr. D. S. Senanayake said that the Board of Ministers hoped to see the new constitution created before the end of the war. When their draft of the constitution was ready the Congress as well as other organisations would have the opportunity of expressing their opinions on it.

After further discussion the resolution was put to the House and carried by 14 votes to 12.

Mr. H. A. Koattegoda moved a resolution to the effect that no person who is a member of an organisation which in the opinion of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee is a political party shall be eligible for membership of the Congress.

Mr. D. S. Senanayake said that the Congress should not work as a political party. He would not however oppose the motion as he proposed to review the whole question at the next annual sessions.

D. Times of Ceylon Report on the Sessions[1]

Congress And Reforms Issue

Ireland And Switzerland As Models

A special session of the Ceylon National Congress, held yesterday at the Colombo Town Hall, authorised the Congress members in the State Council to support a constitution in accordance with the interpretation given by the Board of Ministers to the Declaration of His Majesty's Government.

Mr. P. de S. Kularatne, President, said: "By independence and freedom I mean the right to manage our affairs, the right to choose our friends and our allies—in other words, full control over internal and external affairs as enjoyed by Ireland, Switzerland and other small countries.

1. *Times of Ceylon*, 29 August 1943.

It is the same freedom as the United Nations are attempting to give to the small countries of Europe which are being oppressed under the yoke of Hitlerism.

Some want to know what we are going to do with independence and freedom when we got them. What a question!

Thousands and thousands of men and women are sacrificing their lives for the sake of independence and freedom and there are men and women in Ceylon so degenerate as to ask such a question. To what depths, I ask you, have we sunk under foreign rule!"

Referring to the Declaration by His Majesty's Government on constitutional reforms, Mr. Kularatne said. "Now the long expected dawn has come, but we are still looking about for the sun. We wish to affirm in no uncertain terms that we shall not rest content until we have achieved complete freedom. A constitution drafted in accordance with this Declaration cannot satisfy any freedom-loving people.

What does the Declaration tell us? It says that His Majesty's Government is too busy with the war to worry about our constitutional reforms just now. However, they wish to show their appreciation of the contribution to the war effort which Ceylon has made and is making and of the co-operation which they have found in Ceylon under the leadership of the Board of Ministers and of the State Council. So they devised a plan to keep the Board of Ministers and the State Council quiet.

They outlined the rules for a new game, namely, the game of constitution framing and said: 'Probably this will keep the fellows quiet.' The Board of Ministers however were not prepared to play this game without going into greater details about the rules of the game"

Information Wanted

"I hope our Board of Ministers will draw the attention of His Majesty's Government to our desire to have more information about this Commonwealth, its composition, methods of defence, Government, etc. His Majesty's Ministers in Ceylon as well as in England will

present we think that the word 'Commonwealth' has been carefully used in this Declaration instead of the word 'Empire' without making any substantial difference to us.

The Governor of Ceylon will be performing so many functions under this Constitution for His Majesty's Government that I feel his salary and expenses should be met by the Commonwealth. I hope that our Board of Ministers will see the importance of such a reform."

Mr. Kularatne moved, and Mr. J. R. Jayewardene seconded, that while expressing its dissatisfaction with the Declaration on Reforms, and while reaffirming its demand for freedom after the war, the Congress authorises its members in the State Council to support a constitution drafted in accordance with the interpretation given to the Declaration by the Board of Ministers provided that such a constitution is accepted and implemented by His Majesty's Government within a reasonable time of its acceptance by the State Council.

The discussion was limited to delegates who attended the previous annual session.

Mr. Dudley Senanayake, commending the resolution, said that as far as he could see, the dispute was not as regards the end of freedom, but as regards the means of achieving it. One section wanted non-cooperation with Government as the means, the other thought that circumstances did not allow them at the present moment to launch such a movement. The same people who wanted immediate non-cooperation criticised Congress for not being a representative body and at the same time impressed on Congress that there were various sections unrepresented. Yet it surprised him to see that those very people wanted Congress to launch out on a non-cooperation campaign. That very section desired co-operation in the war effort, to resist the Fascist aggressors. Yet, the measure they advocate must necessarily end in non-co-operation.

Not Logical

They had not opposed Congress working the present constitution, but they did not want Congress to accent a constitution giving more freedom, even if it were given immediately. He did not see the logic in that position.

Congress by accepting the Declaration did not depart from the path of freedom as such, as the Indian Congress did not depart from this position when it accepted the Act of 1935 and worked its Constitution.

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene said that Congress stood for the fullest freedom after the war. If they not free, ways and, means must be devised to secure that freedom.

"What of the period before the end of the War?" he asked. "If we are not prepared now to boycott the State Council, to foment and organise strikes among workers, to start, as India has started, an open rebellion immediately, because such action will interfere with the war effort, then it is logical to support the existence of the State Council.

It also becomes logical to support any measure which gives us a better and more powerful political constitution. Achieving greater freedom than at present, greater unity than we have now among all races in Ceylon before the end of the war, we can advance together to the fullest freedom after the war."

Others who spoke were Mr. Geo. E. de Silva, Mr. P. Givendrasinghe, Mr. D. A. Jayasinghe, *Mud.* N. Wickremaratne, Mr. Peter Perera and Mr. D. P. Beneragama.

The resolution was passed.

39. TWENTY FIFTH ANNUAL SESSIONS, 17-19 DECEMBER 1943

A. AGENDA AND RESOLUTIONS

" Rohana Matha Pura, " Dharmasoka College, Ambalangoda.

Programme

Friday 17th December, 1943

3 p.m.	...	Judging of Exhibits.
5 p.m.	...	Opening of the Swadeshi Exhibition.
5 to 7 p.m.	..	Demonstrations of various substitute foodstuffs by the Dept. of Subsidiary Foodstuffs.
7 p.m.	...	Public discussion on revival of Sinhalese literature at Dharmasoka College Hall, Ambalangoda.

Saturday 18th December, 1943

9 to 10 a.m.	..	Demonstrations of various substitute foodstuffs by the Dept. of Subsidiary Foodstuffs.
10 a.m.	...	All-Ceylon Congress Committee Meeting.
3.30 p.m.	..	Presidential Procession.
4 p.m.	..	Congress Annual Sessions at the Ambalangoda Theatre Hall.
5 to 6 p.m.	..	Demonstrations of various substitute foodstuffs by the Dept. of Subsidiary Foodstuffs.
6 to 8 p.m.	..	Business Sessions at Ambalangoda Theatre Hall.

1. The programme and the resolutions were circulated in printed leaflets in English and in Sinhalese ; see C. N. A., 60/72.

9.30 p.m.	..	A National Variety Entertainment in aid of Congress funds at Ambalangoda Theatre Hall. Rates Rs. 3, 2, & 1. Delegates Rs. 2 & 1.

Sunday 19th December, 1943

9 a.m. to 12 noon	...	Continuation of the Business Sessions.
1 to 2 p.m.	..	Demonstrations of various substitute foodstuffs by the Dept. of Subsidiary Foodstuffs.

Department of Commerce and Industries will also demonstrate textile weaving, mat weaving, coir weaving, pottery making during these days.

The Swadeshi Exhibition continues from 17th to 19th December 1943.

Office Bearers 1944

President:	Mr. Siripala Samarakkody
Jt. Hony. Secretaries:	Mr. J. R. Jayewardene
	Mr. H. A. Koattegoda
Hony. Treasurer:	Mr. A. C. M. Ameer
Chairman of the Reception Committee:	Mr. P. De S. Kularatne

N.B.—Delegates who wish to reserve seats for the National Variety Entertainment should pay for their seats in time.

Train leaves Ambalangoda on Sunday for Colombo at 3.43 p.m. and for Galle and Matara at 5.24 p.m.

Congress Office,
Borella Flats,
Colombo, 1st December, 1943.

B. Minutes of the Sessions

A summary of the proceedings of the [twenty-fifth] annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress and the 4th Swadeshi Exhibition held from the 17th to 19th December 1943 at "Rohana Mathapura," Ambalangoda.

Swadeshi exhibition: The exhibition was opened by Mr. P. de S. Kularatne, the out-going President, on the 17th December at 5 p.m. Large crowds came to attend the exhibition.

Presidential Procession: On the 18th at 4 p.m. the President-elect, Mr. Siripala Samarakkody was conducted in procession with elephants, national dancers, sesath bearers, etc. from the town limits, Ambalangoda. At 5 p.m. on his arrival at the Ambalangoda theatre, the President was greeted by a gathering led by the members of the Reception Committee. Having hoisted the national flag amidst the cheers of the crowd, Mr. Samarakkody entered the conference hall with his wife. A group of singers conducted by Mr. Deva Suryasena then sang the national song. Mr. P. de S. Kularatne, Chairman of the Reception Committee, then delivered his address welcoming the President, the delegates, the other members and the people.

About two hundred delegates from various parts of the Island, and about five hundred people, attended the sessions.

Presidential Address: When the Chairman of the Reception Committee concluded his speech, the president-elect Mr. Siripala Samarakkody delivered an address which inspired the patriotism of all those who were present. It was about 7.30 p.m. when the address ended.

A Variety Entertainment: The delegates were entertained to a concert of national songs, dances, etc. at the Ambalangoda theatre at 9.30 p.m.

Business Sessions : The business sessions was held on the 19th December at 9.30 a.m. at the Ambalangoda theatre, with Mr. Siripala Samarakkody, the President-elect, in the chair.

Report on the Previous Year: This report was distributed among all the members who attended the sessions.

Motions : When the motions on the agenda were taken up for discussion, Mr. Abraham Silva, inquired whether members of the Ceylon National Congress who were members of other political parties could vote at this sessions. The President replied that all those who were members of the Congress could vote.

Mr. C. P. G. Abeyewardena noted that, although at a previous meeting of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee it was decided to table a motion moved by him concerning this issue at the annual sessions, it had not been included in the agenda ; and requested permission to present the resolution. In reply the President said that resolutions regarding amendments to the constitution were scheduled for discussion at the sessions, and they had expected Mr. Abeyewardena's motion concerning political parties to be settled in the course of such discussions and therefore not included his motion in the agenda. However he was ready to permit Mr. Abeyewardena to present his motion.

> This Committee is of opinion that the Communist Party is a political party within the meaning of article 3 sub-section 6 of the Constitution.

The above resolution moved by Mr. C. P. G. Abeyewardena, was seconded by Mr. Abraham Silva. Messrs. P. P. Siriwardena, D. A. Jayasinghe, P. de S. Kularatne, Dudley Senanayake expressed their views on this motion. Thereafter Mr. Abeyewardena answered the questions raised by the previous speakers. The motion was then put to the house by the President and was defeated, with 29 members voting for and 150 members voting against.

1. Resolution on Freedom: Mr. J. R. Jayewardene moved the resolution on freedom in the agenda. Mr. Gilbert Perera seconded. Mr. A. Vaidialingam moved the amendment pertaining to this motion that had been previously notified. Dr. A. Wickremasinghe seconded. The mover and the seconder of the original motion agreed to the amendment. The resolution was carried unanimously.

The confirmed amendment reads as follows:—

1. (*a*) The Ceylon National Congress reaffirms its demand for complete freedom for Ceylon after the war, and instructs the Working Committee to submit a programme of action for implementing this demand to the next All Ceylon Congress Committee.

(*b*) This Congress demands that in the Constitution the Board of Ministers are drafting, no provision should be made (*a*) for a second chamber, (*b*) for His Majesty in Council to revoke or amend such Constitution, and further that the power to amend the Constitution be given to the legislature of the Island.

(c) The Congress is of opinion that the next general election be held under the new Constitution, which should be implemented before the end of 1944.

Mr. P. Jamis Silva spoke against the amendment and Mr. D. A. Jayasinghe spoke in favour of the original motion.

2. Resolution on the Dissolution of the State Council: Mr. H. A. Koattegoda moved the resolution on the dissolution of the State Council. Mr. J. R. Jayewardene seconded. Mr. P. Galoluwa moved the following amendment:—

The Maradana National Congress Association requests the Government to dissolve the State Council as soon as possible.

Mr. D. M. Manoratne seconded. The majority of the members voted against the amendment, and the original motion was carried.

3. Resolution on Food Production: Mr. P. P. Siriwardena moved the above resolution in the agenda. Mr. U. M. Perera seconded. Mr. Anagarika Dharmapriya expressed his views on the subject. Dr. M. H. Saddhasena, seconded by Mr. P. D. S. Jayasekera, moved the following amendments, to sub-section (*b*) & (*c*) :—

(b) The creation of a special organisation for the cultivation of food crops which should include prison labour.

(c) Immediate assistance to the cultivators by the repair of damaged irrigation works and a suitable subsidy to paddy cultivators.

Mr. Dudley Senanayake spoke on the resolution. The amended resolution was carried.

4. Social Service and Social Security: Mr. P. de S. Kularatne moved the above resolution with the proposed additions to section (*a*) sent by the Maradana Association which stated that technical education was necessary. Mr. H. A. Koattegoda seconded the resolution. Messrs. M. G Mendis, G. C. S. Corea, and Dr. A. Wickremasinghe presented their opinions on the subject. The resolution was carried unanimously.

The house adjourned for lunch at 2 p.m. The meal was held at Dharmasoka College and they resumed the sessions after lunch at the same College.

5. Adoption of the Amended Constitution: The next item on the agenda was the adoption of the amended constitution of the Ceylon National Congress. After the amendments listed below were made and the remaining articles were confirmed in their existing form, the constitution was accepted by the house.

Amended Articles

Rule 1 of the Article II: All persons who subscribe to the Congress creed of freedom and have the right to be registered as a voter at an election of a member to the State Council, shall be entitled to become a member of Congress.

Section (*b*) of the Rule 4 of the Article II: That with regard to State Council or local government elections and with regard to any other activity in furtherance of the Congress object of freedom, such party accept Congress decisions.

The following additional rule was included as rule 7 of the Article IV: No association can be constituted without a membership of at least 25.

Rule 5 of the Article V: This Committee shall meet at least once in four months and as frequently as the Working Committee shall think fit to convene meetings, or on a requisition signed by at least 25 members. Such requisition shall state the business for which the Committee is sought to be convened.

Section (*d*) of the Rule 1 of the Article VI: Not more than 15 members appointed by the President from among the members of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee.

Rule (2) of the Article XII: Such Board may nominate candidates for any general election or by-election of the State Council, or local bodies.

H. A. Koattegoda,
J. R. Jayewardene,
Joint Hony. Secretaries.

C. SIRIPALA SAMARAKKODY'S PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS[1]

Brother Delegates, Ladies and Gentlemen,

When I consider the great contribution this Congress has made towards the political emancipation of the Island

1. C. N. A., 60/108; a printed pamphlet which runs to 6 pages and bears Mr. Samarakkody's photograph in front. The pamphlet is dated 1944. A Sinhalese version also exists.

during the quarter century of its existence, and the long line of able and distinguished sons of Lanka that guided its destinies in the past, need I say that the honour you have bestowed on me is indeed great. It is therefore with a feeling of trepidation that I shoulder the heavy and arduous responsibilities of this high office of President. But knowing as I do, that you will always extend to me your sympathy and willing co-operation in the discharge of my duties, I feel that the burden I have undertaken will be much lightened.

Before I go further, I wish to thank the Chairman of the Reception Committee on your behalf for the most cordial and hearty welcome he has extended to us and [*sic*] lavish hospitality so traditional of [*sic*] the people of Ruhuna.

Brother Delegates, the first resolution in the agenda reaffirms our determination to secure complete freedom for the Island after the war. The chief event of political importance during this year has been the Declaration of His Majesty's Government regarding the constitution of the country. For the first time in our struggle for freedom the right to frame our own constitution has been granted to us subject to certain stipulations and limitations.

But I do not think it is necessary for us to pay much heed to these terms and stipulations, which have been inspired by a belief that the various communities in this Island are hopelessly divided. As a matter of fact, Mr. Morrison, a Minister of Cabinet rank, speaking to America, for propaganda purposes, stated that His Majesty's Government has always been willing to grant complete self government to the countries of the empire but that the disunity of the people was in the way. This Congress is prepared to take His Majesty's Government at their word and present a united front to them by making all reasonable concessions to the so called Minority Communities. If this is achieved there is nothing to prevent our drafting any constitution we want. We do not want our freedom for "the part pl ' by the State Council, the Board of Ministers and '

furthering the war effort." We are not demanding the restoration of our freedom as a benevolent dispensation from the British people but we are asking them to give back our birthright which we entrusted to them under a solemn treaty in the year 1815. We are not a conquered people. We are a people belonging to an ancient civilization that possessed social and political institutions of our own and enjoyed autonomous government for over twenty centuries. In this connection I am glad to note that it has been now authoritatively stated that the Atlantic Charter is applicable to India also. Well, we are not far away.

I am confident that the Board of Ministers are more or less working on these lines and that they are prepared to make all reasonable concessions to minorities to allay any suspicions that they may entertain in order to unite the country against the imperial menace.

The second part of your main resolution seeks to advise the Board of Ministers on certain matters of fundamental importance so that there may not be any doubts regarding the views of Congress.

The first is that no provision be made for a second chamber in the new constitution. The controversy as to whether the legislature of a country should be bi-cameral or uni-cameral is not a new one. The arguments for and against are well-known and have been clearly set out as far back as the 18th century. I will not weary you by recapitulating them on this occasion. Suffice it to say that the bi-cameral British Parliament which has been followed by many countries as a model had its origin in the cleavage between social classes. It is, therefore, not in keeping with modern democratic society. The tendency in Britain, even today, is to get rid of the House of Lords. The history of the British Parliament will show that the Lower House did not stop its efforts until the Upper House was stripped of its powers, and today, since the Parliament Act of 1911, as only a suspensive veto is all that is left to the House of Lords, it can reasonably be claimed that the English Parliament is virtually a uni-cameral legislature. This Congress always

stood against a second chamber, as is evidenced by the memorandum to the Donoughmore Commission and the evidence it gave before it.

The next direction the Congress desires to give the Board of Ministers is that no provision should be made to enable His Majesty the King to amend, alter or withdraw the constitution. It is a well known constitutional principle that once representative government is granted to a colony, the right of the King to legislate ceases unless the constitution specially reserves it. In the self-governing dominions, provision is in the constitutions that any alteration in the constitution should be made by a fixed majority of the legislature itself. It will be remembered that the constitution of Malta, while conferring self-government, contained a reservation in favour of the Crown to amend, alter or withdraw the constitution. The constitution was in fact withdrawn on one occasion. It is therefore of the utmost importance that this country should not accept any constitution unless this power is removed

While it has become possible to hold popular elections in many parts of the empire such as South Africa, Australia, and New Zealand, the life of the Ceylon State Council has been twice extended, on the score of the exigencies of war and the difficulty of framing a new constitution. There has been a persistent demand from all over the country that the State Council should be dissolved. Three years ago the then Leader of the State Council Sir Baron Jayatilaka, himself publicly declared that the State Council had become stale. While great attention is paid in Britain to large post-war problems, it is understandable that constitutional reform which is so urgent should await the conclusion of the war. This Congress therefore rightly demands the dissolution of the State Council before the end of 1944 and that an election be held under a new constitution.

The third resolution deals with a subject that looms large in the public mind, the subject of increased food production. At the first session of the Congress this all important subject was discussed and the following [illegible]
"This Congress is of opinion that vigorous [illegible]

steps should be taken by the government to increase the production of food crops in the Island and deplores the slackness of government in taking adequate steps in this direction, which has made the inhabitants chiefly dependent on India for the food supply and in subjecting them to grave hardships and sufferings on [*sic*] the restrictions placed by the Indian government on the export of rice to Ceylon." Twenty-three years have passed since the passing of this resolution and it is sad to contemplate that we are exactly in the same perilous position as we were at that time. Increased food production has not been seriously attempted until the present emergency. Even the steps taken now will in no way permanently solve the problem. What is being done today is the wasteful destruction of valuable forest highlands just for raising two chena crops and at the end of which the land is either abandoned or parcelled out in uneconomic units for village expansion and settlement.

A more forward and progressive policy should be adopted at once. The importation on a large scale of up-to-date agricultural machinery which will be available to all agriculturists on the payment of a small fee, the establishment of co-operative farms supervised by the State and a serious islandwide effort at improving the yield of paddy, by State subsidy where necessary, to enable farmers to adopt scientific methods of cultivation. Hitherto very little attention has been paid to the repair of small irrigation works such as village tanks, ammunas, and elas. My own experience is, particularly in the dry zone, where practically every village has its tank most of which is now in disrepair, that the speedy repair of these works which does not require expert engineering knowledge, will go a long way in bringing into immediate cultivation vast tracts of abandoned paddy fields.

The fourth resolution deals with social service and social security. This resolution merits your very careful and earnest consideration. In dealing with the problem of poverty and the quick amelioration of the condition of the

masses the first step that the State can take is the immediate extension on a wide scale of well considered schemes of social services. The most important of these have been classed under the heading "Health Insurance," "Unemployment Insurance," "Old Age Pensions," and "Free Education." In the British Isles the dual schemes of compulsory national health and pensions, insurance (with exceptions to certain voluntary classes) embracing roughly the whole wage earning community has been in operation as regards Health for the last thirty years; and as regards pensions for seventeen years, interlocked by a common contribution by workers and employers jointly, augmented by State grants. Compulsory insurance against unemployment (financed jointly by the State, employees and employers) covers all the male workers under the age of 65 and female workers under the age of 60. Besides, the blind are not solely to depend on private charity. Provision is made for blind (old age) pensions. The extent of these social services can be gauged by the fact that under the various schemes of health insurance, old age pensions and unemployment insurances nearly thirty-eight million people are benefited and the State has to provide annually for pensions, old age and national benefits under non-contributory old age and national health insurance (contributory) a sum of nearly one hundred and five million pounds. A resolution moved in the State Council for an old age pension scheme by Mr. Kularatne, my predecessor, has been reported on by the Financial Secretary. While drawing attention to the cost of such a scheme he lays stress on the fact that the money required could be better spent in agricultural developments which, according to him, are more urgent. It is no doubt possible for the government to adduce this argument whenever there is a suggestion for the extension of any form of social service. Instead the government should follow a more progressive policy of taxation. The Board of Ministers have been and are reluctant to increase taxation. At the first opportunity they abolished the death duty which was subsequently re-introduced, and today they appear to be contem ting

reduction of the excess profit on certain commodities. If you accept this resolution, which I am confident you will, and wish to see it put into effect, you should, in your associations and throughout the country, demand of the Board of Ministers the immediate increase of taxation with a view to financing schemes of social security and post-war reconstruction.

The Select Committee on Educational Reforms has produced a most valuable report. We must congratulate the committee for the bold step it has taken in recommending that all education, from the kindergarten to the university, should be provided free. The extra expenditure of a few million rupees should not stand in the way of providing a most essential service which will give equal opportunities to one and all to enjoy the chief gift of civilization and equip themselves to be useful citizens in a truly democratic society. I heartily commend the acceptance of this resolution.

Brother delegates, we have reached a most momentous and critical period of our history. The outlook of individuals no less than of nations has changed. The United Nations have rightly declared that all people have the right to choose the form of government under which they live. We fervently and enthusiastically support the principle. If Britain is sincere in this affirmation and desires to convince the world that this declaration is not merely a platitude but is born of a genuine conviction regarding the rights of man, then it must be immediately prepared to examine all her imperial conquests of the past and forthwith restore sovereign rights and self-government to all subject nations of the empire who have been deprived of their freedom. We have thrown in our lot on the side of the progressive nations of the world to completely destroy Fascism and Nazism. But if we are to secure a peace which will enable all nations to live in harmony and accord, we must continue to fight imperialism until it is effectively destroyed, for Fascism and Nazism are but offshoots of imperialism.

It is not altogether out of place for us to focus our attention to the position we shall occupy in the post-war world. When we look at the large number of small countries that have been ruthlessly deprived of their freedom during the course of this war not for any acts of hostility or aggression but because they were physically unable to defend their freedom against the gigantic war machine of a bloodthirsty monster, we are more than convinced that our small island cannot remain isolated, unassociated with a powerful country or a group of countries. Leaving aside sentiments, weighing the balance of advantages, what is practical politics today is for this Island to continue to be associated as a free and equal partner with the British Commonwealth of Nations. Nevertheless a time will come sooner or later when we shall have to reconsider even this position. The great sub-continent of India, truly our motherland, will break off her imperial shackles and live again as a free and powerful people. Considering the geographical proximity, the close kinship with the people of India, the cultural, religious and economic ties of centuries, and the strategic position that this Island occupies in relation to the motherland it is neither an idle speculation nor a fanciful prophecy that our Lanka will be reunited as a free and independent constituent in the United States of a greater India.

We have decided that we shall live as a free people with our own form of Government. In the achievement of this it is of the utmost importance to rally under the banner of the National Congress all progressive elements of the various communities of this Island. We have therefore in the suggested amendments of the Congress constitution made provision to enable all political parties of whatever complexion they may be who subscribe to the Congress creed of freedom to join the ranks of Congress

Friends, I have not the least doubt that every son and daughter of Lanka in whose innermost recess of the soul resides that spark of patriotic ardour will join this great body and help to kindle it until it assumes a tic a majestic flame. With the torch thus creat

symbolise the unity of all people living in this island, let us march forward to see that this rarest gem of the Indian Ocean will regain its pristine lustre and take her rightful place among the nations of the world.

B. Ceylon Daily News Report on the Sessions

Communist Issue at National Congress

Decision to Admit the Party

The Ceylon National Congress threw open its doors to members of the Communist Party today.

There was a resolution on the agenda by way of an amendment of the constitution to admit members of other political parties as members of the Congress under certain conditions. Before that resolution was moved, however, Mr. C. P. G. Abeyewardena asked permission to move a motion which he had submitted to the executive committee but which did not appear on the agenda.

The question aroused a great deal of interest and members of the Communist Party, easily recognised by their attire, white cloth and white "streamlined" coats, had assembled in large numbers to vote in favour of the admission of members of the Communist and other parties to the Congress.

The President (Mr. Siripala Samarakkody) allowed the discussion of the matter before taking up the resolutions before the assembly.

Mr. Abeyewardena began to speak in English. He was the only member of the Congress who spoke in English throughout. Even the presidential address on the previous day was read from a Sinhalese manuscript while English translations of it were circulated throughout the hall. Interruptions followed.

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1. *CDN*, 20 December 1943.

Clamour for Sinhalese Speech

Large numbers in the assembly, most of all the "streamlined-ones," clamoured for a Sinhalese speech. They called upon Mr. Abeyewardena not to speak in English but in Sinhalese. Mr. Abeyewardena apologised and begged to be allowed to speak in Sinhalese later on. Continuing to speak in English, he outlined the history of the resolution, which, he said, dated back four years ago when Congress tried to decide whether members of other political parties or organisations could be allowed to join Congress. They endeavoured to overcome the difficulty by debarring such from holding office in Congress.

In the constitution of 1941 this article, 3 (6) read as follows: "No person who is a member of an organisation which in the opinion of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee is a political organisation shall be eligible for election to any office or Committee in the Congress Party."

At the Kelaniya sessions the following motion was on the agenda: "No person who is a member of an organisation which in the opinion of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee is a political party shall be eligible for membership in the Congress."

The special session of Congress held in August decided to accept this resolution. That was the present rule and it was passed because Congress wanted 100 per cent loyalty. He raised the question in Committee and asked the Committee to decide whether the Communist Party was a political party. Instead of arriving at a decision someone moved by way of amendment to his motion that it should be referred to this session.

To the question whether the Communist Party was a political party, there was but one answer and that was that the Communist Party was a political party. Probably the fate of the Congress depended on that answer today. Mr. D. S. *Senanayake left the Executive Committee on that issue.* Mr. Abeyewardena asked Congress not to stultify itself by taking it upon itself to declare that the Communist Party was not a political party.

Mr. Abraham Silva seconded Mr. Abeyewardena's resolution.

Mr. D. A. Jayasinghe opposing said that the Committee had to decide the question and none else.

Clarifying the Position

Mr. P. de S. Kularatne said he would clarify the position. It was undesirable to have two kinds of members, members who could not hold office and members who could hold office. The resolution had been put in that form to allow the admission of members of the Communist Party.

Mr. Dudley Senanayake, while agreeing with Mr. Abeyewardena that the Communist Party was a political party, said it was unnecessary to bring up the matter now as the proposed amendment to the constitution would admit Communists to the Congress. He asked Mr. Abeyewardena to withdraw his motion.

Mr. P. P. Siriwardena supported the motion.

Mr. Abeyewardena, replying again in English, amidst shouts of "speak in Sinhalese," said that the Congress itself must decide this question without the votes of the Communists. If his resolution was passed the Communists present would be debarred from participating in the proceedings till the Congress itself admitted them. The Communists present shouted that they were members of Congress and must be allowed to vote.

The President ruled that they could vote.

Mr. Abeyewardena's motion was put to the meeting and lost by a large majority.

It was whispered at the meeting that Mr. D. S. Senanayake had sent a telegram to the President of the Congress protesting against the presence of members of other political parties in the Congress, but no such telegram was read at the meeting.

Congress then proceeded to discuss the resolutions on the printed agenda, amongst which were the following:

Resolutions

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene proposed and Mr. Gilbert Perera seconded:

(a) The Ceylon National Congress reaffirms its demand for complete freedom after the war, and instructs the Working Committee to submit a program of action implementing the demand at the next sessions of the National Congress.

(b) This Congress demands that in the Constitution the Board of Ministers are drafting, no provision should be made either for a second chamber, or for his Majesty in Council to revoke or amend such Constitution, and further that the power to amend the Constitution be given to the legislature of the Island.

(c) The Congress is of opinion that the next general election be held under the new constitution, which shall be implemented before the end of 1944.

This was passed.

Proposed by Mr. H. A. Koattegoda and seconded by Mr. Jayewardene the following resolution was adopted:

The present State Council having exceeded the term of office for which it was elected has ceased to be representative of the people, and the Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that the Council should therefore be dissolved as early as possible, in 1944.

The following resolution was also passed:

With a view to improving the food situation in Ceylon, both during and after the war, this Congress urges—

(a) All Congress Associations, and political, social and religious organisations, to encourage food production.

(b) The creation of a special organisation, inclusive of prison labour, for the cultivation of food crops.

(c) Immediate assistance to cultivators by the repair of damaged irrigation works.

(d) Proper supervision of paddy cultivation, and the grant of a suitable subsidy, and

(e) The provision of grazing fields for cattle.

Presidental Address

The dissolution of the State Council before the end of 1944 and an election under a new constitution was demanded by Mr. Siripala Samarakkody in the course of his Presidential Address at the 24th [*sic*] sessions of the Ceylon National Congress yesterday.

The session commenced on Friday evening with the formal opening of the Industries and Food Exhibition by Mr. P. de S. Kularatne, the outgoing President at "Rohana Matha," Dharmasoka College. Mr. Kularatne, in the course of his speech, thanked the Civil Defence Commissioner for installing the food demonstration stall.

Mr. Samarakkody said that the Congress was prepared to take His Majesty's Government at their word and present a united front to them by making all reasonable concessions to the so-called minority communities. If that was achieved there was nothing to prevent their drafting any constitution they wanted. He said that the Ceylon National Congress always stood against a Second Chamber as was evidenced by the memorandum to the Donoughmore Commission and the evidence it gave before it. The next direction, he said, the Congress desired to give the Board of Ministers was that no provision should be made to enable His Majesty the King to amend, alter, or withdraw the constitution.

Regarding food crops he said: "Increased food production has not been seriously attempted until the present emergency. Even the steps taken now will in no way permanently solve the problem. What is being done today is the wasteful

destruction of valuable forest highlands just for raising two chena crops and at the end of which the land is either abandoned or parcelled out in uneconomic units for village expansion and settlement. A more forward and progressive policy should be adopted at once: the importation on a large scale of up-to-date agricultural machinery which will be available to all agriculturists on the payment of a small fee, the establishment of co-operative farms supervised by the State, and a serious island-wide effort at improving the yield of paddy, by State subsidy where necessary, to enable farmers to adopt scientific methods of cultivation."

He then advocated the immediate increase of taxation with a view to financing schemes of social security and post-war reconstruction.

Education Report

Congratulating the Select Committee on Education on their report he said: "The extra expenditure of a few million rupees should not stand in the way of providing a most essential service which will give equal opportunities to one and all to enjoy the chief gift of civilization."

Regarding the future of Ceylon he said that what was practical politics today, was for this Island to continue to be associated as a free and equal partner with the British Commonwealth of Nations. Nevertheless a time would come sooner or later when this position would have to be reconsidered.

It was neither an idle speculation nor a fanciful prophecy that Lanka would be re-united as a free and independent constituent in the united states of a greater India.

E. Times of Ceylon Report On the Sessions[1]

Congress Takes In Communists

Eligibility Upheld

The Communist Party of Ceylon are now full-fledged members of the Ceylon National Congress, the question as

1. *Times of Ceylon*, 20 December 1943.

E. APPENDICES TO THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL SESSIONS

(1) An Appraisal by the Political Correspondent[1] of the Ceylon Daily News, 21 December 1943

Decline and Fall of the Ceylon National Congress
Record of Inconsistent Policy and Lack of Principle

Has the Ceylon National Congress been revived completely, or even partly, from the moribund state into which it had fallen in the last few years ? Have the promises of change and overhaul given at the Mirigama session in 1940 been fulfilled ? Is it today a representative body, or representative at least of an appreciable part of the country ? What success has attended its effort to establish itself as a political party ? Is the Congress being conducted in accordance with set rules, and upon definite principles ?

These are questions that are being asked by many people. The Congress has just held its 24th [*sic*] annual session. In spite of past lapses, there are people who hoped that the Congress would once again be able to take its rightful place among the political institutions of the country; that it would once more become a power in the land, as it was in the first ten years of its existence.

There is nothing at all in recent doings of the Congress to show that such a resuscitation has taken place. On the contrary, everything points to a worsening of all its faults. Its chief defect is its inability to adhere to its own principles. Individuals, just a handful of them, have begun to control its activities. How can such a Congress claim for itself an all-island character ? How can people pin their faith on its sincerity, on its ability to give the country a lead in political work ?

How different the Congress was in the pre-Donoughmore period ! It originated at a special conference held in 1918 by a Joint Committee of two of the most powerful political

1. Mr. J. L. Fernando. A translation of this article also appeared in the Sinhalese daily, the *Silumina*, 26 December 1943 under the authorship of " Shri Lanka Puthra. " The same issue of the *Silumina* also contained an article on the subject of the Congress under the headline " Vatin Pitin. "

bodies of that time, namely, the Ceylon Reform League and the Ceylon National Association. At this conference the following resolution was passed: "That a permanent organisation be formed for the purpose of co-ordinating public opinion and political thought and work in Ceylon by periodically convoking a representative Congress and carrying out its resolutions."

And in terms of that decision, the first session of the Congress met on December 11, 1919, under the Presidentship of Sir P. Arunachalam. The most characteristic feature of the new body was that it was thoroughly representative; its members and Executive Committee were drawn from all communities and classes, from all walks of life, and from practically all the districts of the Island.

The Congress became so influential that it was able to dictate terms to the Government. When the 1920 Order-in-Council was proposed, it was felt that the scheme of reforms outlined in it was far from satisfactory, and the Congress threatened non-participation. The Governor, Sir William Manning, rather than have the Congress opposed to him, decided to meet a deputation at Queen's House. Here, he gave the Congress certain written pledges, one of which was that amendments to the Order-in-Council would be considered within one year of the first meeting of the new Legislative Council.

In the next few years, the Congress proceeded from strength to strength. Unfortunately, in 1922 there occurred what was called "the Sinhalese-Tamil Split," leading to the withdrawal of certain Tamil leaders, including Sir P. Arunachalam, from the Congress. The question at issue was the territorial principle in elections. Not even the secession of its first President would make the Congress disloyal to that principle. Principles and not persons, was the Congress creed of that time.

The fight for Reforms went on, the Congress always taking a leading part. Then came the Donoughmore Reforms. Here, again, the Congress view that these Reforms, though defective and falling short of the country's demands, should be accepted, prevailed.

The decline of the Congress dates from about 1931, the time of the inauguration of the first State Council. The Congress derived its strength from the affiliated associations, of which there was a large number all over the Island. Many of those who had taken a leading part in them had entered the State Council. They either thought that having achieved their ambition they need no longer try to keep the Congress going, or they found little time to devote to Congress work. Others who could, or might, have kept the affiliated associations together began themselves to think in terms of State Council seats. Thus, service for its own sake became a secondary slogan. Furthermore, Congressmen who had entered the State Council, feeling the lack of central strength in the organisation, began to act on their own and proved to be disloyal to the Congress creed. In fact, this tendency was evident in the first State Council elections when leading Congressmen went and backed outsiders for various seats as against fellow Congressmen.

The downward trend continued. It was sometimes said that there was a Congress Party in the State Council. But apart from the fact that an all-Congress Board of Ministers was elected in the second State Council, there was no evidence that Congressmen were acting as a political party should. The Congress found it difficult to find even a President at this time, and the same person was elected over and over again. Its Executive Committee lost its representative character, and men were chosen for it merely because they were acquainted with one or two leading Congress members. An attempt was made to form Congress branches in provincial towns. Here, again, there was no central drive forthcoming and most Congress branches so formed exist today only in name.

In 1940, another attempt was made to give the dying body new life. Following the very much earlier example of the Indian National Congress, the Ceylon Congress took its session to the village. The Mirigama session was very successful. There was an impressive swadeshi exhibition. But once the annual session was over, the enthusiasm faded.

There was a splendid opportunity of taking up the trail from Mirigama onwards. But that could not be done owing to certain dissensions. Could a Congress member become the member of another political party? This question was raised in reference to the Sinhala Maha Sabha, and it was finally decided after long discussions that henceforth none could owe allegiance both to the Congress and another political party.

The Congress' attempt to run as a political party has been attended with disaster. Everybody knows of the failure of the Congress Party in the Colombo Municipal Council. Stranger still, last year there was the instance of Mr. D. S. Senanayake, Leader of the State Council, who by virtue of his position must be reckoned to be the head of the Congress Party in the State Council, being outvoted at the Congress session—and receiving only four votes from the whole Congress!

The same question of whether members of another party could remain in the Congress has risen again, and caused further dissension. It will be remembered that this year the Congress held a special session in the Town Hall, Colombo, to consider the Secretary of State's Declaration on Reforms. It was found at this session that members of the new Communist Party were present as Congress members. One of the Congress members, Mr. C. P. G. Abeyewardena, questioned the President, Mr. Kularatne, as to how they had got in. It appears that the latter stated that they had been admitted to the Congress before the Communist Party was formed and as members of other branch associations. Thereupon, Mr. Abeyewardena gave notice of a resolution that the Communist Party be declared a party in terms of the Congress constitution. The passing of this resolution would have had the effect of automatically shutting out members of the Communist Party from the Congress.

Mr. Abeyewardena's resolution was discussed at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Congress, and it was decided, I understand, to take up the matter at the annual

session in December. But no such resolution figured in the agenda for the new session, instead, there was a resolution to the effect that "a member of another political party which subscribes to the Congress creed of freedom shall be entitled to join a Congress organisation provided such party decides to do so by special resolution." By whom, or when, this new resolution was introduced into the Congress agenda is not clear.

The point at issue was this: The Congress had definitely decided to exclude members of other political parties. Why was this rule not enforced against the Communist Party?

In deciding to exclude other political parties, the Executive and Working Committees of the Congress fell out with Mr. D. S. Senanayake. Mr. Senanayake's view was that the Congress should continue to be a platform for those holding any political creed, irrespective of party allegiance. Two of those who went strongly contrary to Mr. Senanayake were the outgoing President, Mr. Kularatne, and Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, who, as is well known, is one of those who controls the Congress today. But I understand both of them were not at all anxious to enforce the new rule as against the Communists—which accounts for the strange wording of the resolution placed at the latest session.

At the proceedings last Saturday, Mr. Abeyewardena appears to have insisted upon his resolution being discussed. The Communist members, present in large numbers, outvoted him, and decided that they should be admitted to the Congress! Thus the Congress for no other reason than to accommodate the Communists has reversed the decision it arrived at a few months ago. There is no saying what the new Congress-Communist Party will not do, or undo, in the next few months.

(2) Ceylon Daily News Editorial, 21 December 1943: "Epitaph for The Congress"

In a special article which we publish today our Political Correspondent analyses some of the factors contributing to the steady degeneration of the Ceylon National Congress

in recent years. The twenty-fourth [*sic*] annual sessions of the Congress afford a useful mile-post from which to review the history of the organisation. When the Ceylon National Congress first came into being, and for some years thereafter, it did much for the cause of constitutional progress in Ceylon. Up to the time of the Donoughmore Commission it might claim to have been the only organised body in the country which fought for and insisted on obtaining some of the concessions which should culminate eventually in that full freedom which it adopts as its political objective today. For what has been achieved in this respect the Congress of the past must take a good deal of the credit. But at the time when the Donoughmore Commission's report was under discussion opinion in the Congress as in the country was divided as a whole, as to whether the Commissioners proposals should be accepted or not, and upon this issue many of the sincerest and most energetic members of the Congress left its ranks because they felt they could not assent to the new constitution. Of those who remained some, it must be said, did so because they had their eyes on the ministerial posts and other plums of office promised by the new dispensation. And some of the newcomers to the organisation at this time have not proved the equal in point of personal and political integrity of those who left.

From thenceforward the Congress has been leading a moribund existence and living on the reflected glory of its earlier achievements. It has long since ceased to be representative of the whole country or of a cross section of its various interests, communities, classes, professions and occupations, or even its geographical districts. The lofty ideals of service to the country upon which it had been founded have been lost from view and it has become more and more a cause for professional politicians in search of a platform. Today it neither leads, moulds, nor reflects opinion. Those who have observed the Congress during recent years could have predicted that it would come to its present pass. It is only a few years ago that certain of the leading members, distinguished for their long service and financial

sacrifices to the Congress, were drummed out of the organisation by the predominant clique for belonging to another political party or for supporting members of another party.[1] This despite the fact that the Congress's attempt to organise itself as a political party, in the parliamentary sense, has been a dismal failure from start to finish.

We may instance the fact that only last year the Leader of the State Council, who by virtue of his position in the House must be ranked among the leading spirits of the Congress and considered the party chief in the State Council, found only four supporters for his attitude towards an important amendment to the Congress program. The significance of this can be appreciated by asking oneself what would have happened to a party leader in the House of Commons if he were so heavily outvoted at a party conference. Mr. Senanayake's political career would undoubtedly have come to an untimely end if the Congress were a force to reckon with in the political life of the country. It has long ago ceased to be anything of the sort. At present the Congress represents nothing but itself and derives what force it has from the collective personal and political aspirations of its individual members. Principles have gone by the board; and those who did not meet with the approval of the moving spirits of the organisation have been elbowed out of its counsels on one pretext or another. Now that recent events, as recorded by our correspondent, have shown the true aim of these manoeuvres, it is clear that the motive power has been political chicanery. By lending itself to such tactics the Congress has lost its good name and written its own epitaph in the political life of the country.

(3) Times of Ceylon Editorial, 21 December 1943 : "Congress in Captivity"

The Communists have captured the Congress. They have captured it by adopting the time-honoured tactics of the cuckoo. Profiting by the preoccupation of the Congress

1. This refers to the expulsion of the Amarasuriya brothers, D. S. de Fonseka, etc. in 1942. See *supra*, pp. 723–32.

bosses with other concerns, the Communists clandestinely laid their eggs in the Congress nest. At Ambalangoda during the past week-end end the eggs hatched out. And now the young cuckoos command the Congress, while some of the former Congress bosses have retired in dudgeon and others are striving to find a formula for coming to terms with the Communists. The local Communists in capturing the Ceylon Congress have succeeded where their Indian counterparts have failed. In spite of repeated attempts on the part of the Indian Communists, the Indian National Congress has foiled the ambition of the Communist Party there to make the Congress its tool.

In Ceylon the Congress has succumbed almost without a struggle to Communist strategy. This was only to be expected, because the most distinctive feature of the Ceylon Congress has been absence of principles. It never seemed to know its own mind. Faint-hearted efforts have been made from time to time to organize a Congress Party. When after much talk the promoters of the Party idea came face to face with the question of party discipline, they gave up the attempt. Discipline was enforced only on those whom the Congress managers wanted to get rid of for their own purposes. So it happened that an ex-President of the Congress who had spent so much money on it that he was said to have bought up the concern, was expelled from the Congress for flirting with another political body. Soon afterwards when a Congress Secretary indulged in equally flirtatious tactics, no action was taken against him. This discrimination exemplified Congress technique. There are persons whom the Congress finds useful to keep within its fold till some object is attained. Thereafter, especially if they threaten to become too powerful, they are banished. On the other hand, there are others who look upon the Congress as their family property. These can in no way be thrust out of their heritage.

The constitution of the Congress bears evidence of its anxiety to be all things to all men provided it can include some and exclude others. Two years ago it enacted th

none who belonged to another political organization could be elected to any office or Committee of the Congress. Later a 100 per cent loyalty was exacted even for membership. Congressmen could not belong to any other organization. That seemed conclusive enough. Applied to the Communists, it would mean that they could not become members of the Congress. But such a hard and fast decision would be foreign to the Congress mentality, which has ever been supremely opportunist. When, therefore, the young cuckoos assembled at Ambalangoda demanded to be left in possession of the Congress nest, they were given full accommodation. Once in the State Council Sir Baron Jayatilaka held up a file which he said contained damning police evidence against the Communists. Mr. D. S. Senanayake is said to have retired from the Congress Committee because he would have no truck with the Communists. The reactions of those two Congress leaders to the capture of their citadel will be watched with interest. The Congress, ever falsely called National, becomes now part of the International.

(4) Letter to the Editor, Ceylon Daily News from "Etienne," 22 December 1943[1]

Sir,

In your editorial of yesterday you have made a devastating attack on the lack of principles of the National Congress. Your political correspondent's article also dwells on the same theme. Lack of principles alone will not, however, explain the tragic failure of the Congress as a political force. Changes of principles and policies have not been an unusual feature of many very successful political parties elsewhere in the world. The diplomatic inconsistencies of the Conservative Party and the opportunism of the Nazi Party in the early days of its fight for power will overshadow a hundred Ceylon National Congress. How then did the Congress fail ? It failed because the leaders of the Congress, though they may have been extremly able representatives of their vocations, were not real politicians in the

1. *CDN*, 23 December 1943.

sense. They tried to build noble structures without any foundations with the inevitable result. The only men who really had true political vision, Walisinha Harischandra and Anagarika Dharmapala, never got a chance, perhaps because of their own predilection towards religion.

The first essential of a successful national movement, particularly in a country which has been badly denationalized, is to create a strong national consciousness. All else will follow from this. As Mr. Arthur Dias said, in a letter published by you, quoting an Irish patriot. "When the desire for liberty pervades a nation, even the very cobblestones in the streets would rise in answer to the call." The two principal ways of accomplishing this are through a national system of education and by the revival of national culture. Examine the record of the National Congress since its inception to see whether anything was planned in these two spheres. The failure of our political movements will then be apparent.—Yours etc.,

Etienne

Colombo, December, 22.

(5) Letter to the Editor, Ceylon Daily News from " Civis, " 22 December 1943[1]

Sir,

Your leading article and that of your political correspondent in your issue of the 21st December have exposed very clearly the self seeking opportunism which now masquerades as the Ceylon National Congress. Abraham Lincoln said you can deceive all the people some of the time, some of the people all the time but not all the people all the time ! Capitalism and Communism have kissed each other in the recent Borella municipal election and it is no wonder that the Congress should openly embrace the new Gospel at the Ambalangoda Congress. The Congress has this time not contested the Colombo Municipal Council seats under the specious plea that it is going to recuperate for

1. *CDN*, 24 December 1943

could not continue indefinitely unless he was prepared to forego his convictions. If we are agreed that it is desirable to have a clean and straightforward political life, it must also be agreed that it is better to stick to principles than to a party or a political program, especially where the party has proved a failure as a political organisation and the program has been conspicuous for its vagueness and inconsistency. Now that Mr. Senanayake is out, the question everyone will be asking is what will happen to the Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce, who is the only member of the present Board of Ministers who has been a member of the Congress without owing allegiance to any other political organisation.

(9) Times of Ceylon Editorial, 29 December 1943: "The Karma of Congress"

The Ceylon Congress, once falsely called National and now more properly described as Communist, has been accused of inconsistency. The charge cannot be denied. In one respect however it has been thoroughly consistent—in dropping its pilots. From time to time those who once aspired to guide its course have been unceremoniously set adrift and told to go. The last to go is Mr. D. S. Senanayake who created a mild holiday diversion by resigning from the Congress. In taking this unavoidable step Mr. Senanayake has exemplified in himself the inexorable working of the law of Karma. He goes even as others went before him. And the manner of this going is that which was designed for those who preceded him. Even as he once made it too hot for others to remain within the Congress, its temperature has been made too warm for him by the new Congress bosses who look to Moscow as their spiritual home.

Observers of the fitness of things will find a moral in the way of Mr. Senanayake's departure. In much the same way did the founder of Congress, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, depart from it. Sir Ponnambalam and Sir James Peiris were associated in bringing the Congress into existence. Among their lieutenants were Mr. Senanayake and

his brothers. All went well for a time, but when the Legislative Council was enlarged as a first measure of reform it was felt in the Congress circles where the Senanayake influence was supreme that Sir Ponnambalam's work was accomplished. He was of course not told to go but the Congress atmosphere was becoming too hot for him, even as Mr. Senanayake judged the air at Ambalangoda too sultry for his comfort. So Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam was forced to resign from the Congress. Sir James Peiris however still remained within the Congress. He remained only because the predestined day for his exit was not yet. Then when the hour struck he found the Congress atmosphere too hot for his liking—and he went. And Mr Senanayake was not the man to say nay to him. Mr. E. W. Perera, another of the Congress stalwarts, remained, but the day of his departure was not far off. Then without let or hindrance from Mr. Senanayake he also went. In more recent times Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike and Mr. H. W. Amarasuriya were affected by the heat-wave emanating from within the Congress—and they went. If Sir Baron Jayatilaka did not find the atmosphere of Congress too hot it was only because the climate of Ceylon had become unhealthy for him. Therefore he went to India. And now Mr. Senanayake who has seen so many go—and not always of their own volition— has obeyed the law of Karma and is himself gone.

The Ceylon Congress is more distinguished for those who have left it than for those who remain in it. Chained to the Karmic wheel, these latter know what is coming to them Congressmen however keep on pathetically deceiving themselves. Just as those who were deeply imbued with the communal bias long maintained the pretence that the Congress was not communal, the Congress capitalists are now pretending to the communists who have seized the Congress that they are true-red communists. If they imagine that by such professions they can defer the judgment that awaits them, they are only storing up for themselves a [illegible] disillusionment. They forget that the one thing

gress can never do is to be true either to itself or to anybody else. They will go, nor will they be suffered to stand on the order of their going. Their departure is only a matter of time.

(10) Article Communicated To Young Ceylon, November-December 1943: "Emancipation Of The National Congress"

Recently the Ceylon National Congress held its annual sessions at Ambalangoda, when a decision of far-reaching import has been taken, in so far as the Congress has decided to admit persons belonging to the Congress creed of freedom, accept Congress decisions and support Congress nominees to the State Council elections.

This decision has been due to a desire to combine the country against, what was termed by the President, the imperial menace. This decision, to which no objection could be taken on principle, has had somewhat curious repercussions. The Lake House press had devoted about 5 columns to denounce the Congress and has gone to the extent even of writing the Congress Epitaph. One wonders whether so much ammunition is necessary to denounce the Congress if, as stated, it is dead.

Another result of the decision of the session is the resignation of Mr. D. S. Senanayake from Congress. As a matter of fact, those who followed carefully Congress activities during the last three years were at a loss to understand why Mr. Senanayake did not leave Congress much earlier. As is well known, Congress members until a few years ago were a law unto themselves. For instance there was the curious spectacle of Congress bosses supporting non-Congress candidates to the State Council as against even a Congress Secretary.

The early constitution of Congress gave ample opportunity for all kinds of machinations by these Congress bosses. The Mirigama sessions of 1940 put an end to this by deciding that the Ceylon National Congress must constitute itself a party. Mr. Senanayake most vehemently opposed it, and in spite

of his opposition this was carried by a large majority. At the Kelaniya sessions of 1942 the Congress declared that its goal was freedom for the country Again Mr. Senanayake very vehemently opposed the resolution, but he had the support of only 4 members. This decision led to the resignation of Mr. Senanayake from the All Ceylon Congress Committee. But at the Kelaniya bye-election he became the election agent of the mover of the freedom resolution. Did he not therein act against his avowed principles?

It would seem as if Mr. Senanayake has been seeking for some excuse to leave Congress, and the latest decision of the Congress has been made use of. If Mr. Senanayake felt that the decisions to be taken at the sessions were of such far reaching import as to induce him to sever his connection with Congress, one would have expected him to be present at the sessions and to have participated in its deliberations. Instead he was found distributing prizes at a small school at Matale.

Mr. Senanayake has also been deliberately acting against Congress principles. It has been the declared policy of the Congress that no paid servant of the Crown or a Minister should draw a salary of over Rs. 1,000 a month. But Mr. Senanayake as Minister has been drawing ever since the Congress decided on this policy, Rs. 1,500 and when the matter was brought home to him at a meeting of the Congress Executive he threatened to resign from the Congress if a decision adverse to him was arrived at by the Executive.

But, one really wonders whether Mr. Senanayake's resignation from Congress is a loss to Congress. It would appear that he merely emancipated Congress. The presence of Mr. Senanayake checked the natural development of Congress because he attempted to make Congress dance to his tune. Even on the most important question of the impending reforms there is not the least doubt that Congress was not in a position to give a bolder lead to the country on account of the presence of Mr. Senanayake - other Ministers.

Mr. Senanayake has long ceased, as pointed out above, to be a force in Congress. The conclusion is irresistible that he had made use of this opportunity to leave Congress. Mr. Senanayake has duly resigned from the Congress. What of the State Council ? What about his position as Minister of Agriculture and Lands and Leader of the House ? Mr. Senanayake entered the State Council on the Congress ticket. On the Congress ticket he became Minister and later Leader of the House. Why won't he follow suit and tender his resignation as Member of Minuwangoda, Minister of Agriculture and Lands and as Leader of the State Council? He kicks the ladder by which he climbed to giddy fame but clings tenaciously to the position that the ladder enabled him to reach. A historian of the Congress since the days Sir Don Baron Jayatilaka abandoned it after getting the best and the utmost the Congress could give, would point to Mr. Senanayake as its evil genius. He it was who prevented the Congress from being a force in the country. He found Congress a giant powerful organisation. He reduced it to a petty cabal with himself as its leading olympian tin-god.

40. SPECIAL SESSIONS, 2 SEPTEMBER 1944

A. Circular note re Special Sessions, 25 July 1944[1]

Congress Office, Borella Flats,
Colombo, 25th July 1944.

Dear Friend,

A SPECIAL SESSIONS of the Congress will be held at the Town Hall, Colombo, on Saturday the 2nd September at 10 a.m. to consider:

(1) The political situation,
(2) Boycott of the proposed Commission on Reforms,
(3) A General Election on the issue of complete independence.

Further particulars appear on the next page.

Please send your delegate fee of Rs 2 before the 15th August.

Yours truly,
Joint Hony. Secretaries
H. A. Koattegoda,
J. R. Jayewardene,

P. S.—Meals will be provided for the delegates.

(1) Whereas the original Declaration by His Majesty's Government on Constitutional Reform read out in the State Council on the 26th of May, 1943, was declared by the Secretary of State for the Colonies and understood by the Board of Ministers and the people of this country to mean that if the Board of Ministers could produce a Constitution which in the opinion of a Commission or

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delegates fee of Rs 2, before the 31st July, 1944.

I think neither the President nor the Working Committee has the power to postpone the sessions, and that such action can only be taken at the sessions itself if the majority of the delegates wish to do so. I suggest that a meeting of the Working Committee be held between the 18th and the 25th August, either at Siripala's house, if he is well, or at my place, to discuss the line of action the Working Committee is to take at the sessions. Please find out a date suitable to George and Kularatne to whom you may show this letter.

Yours truly,

P. S.—I am sending a copy to Siripala.

C. Minutes of the Sessions

A summary of the special sessions held on Saturday, the 2nd September 1944 at 10 a.m. at the Town Hall, Colombo.

A large crowd and about 125 delegates attended the meeting. Mr. P. de S. Kularatne was elected chairman. The proceedings commenced after passing a vote of condolence on the death of Mr. Siripala Samarakkody, President of the Congress.

Letters : Letters and telegrams received were tabled.

Motions : Mr. Gilbert Perera presented the following motion, which was seconded by Mr. S. Sri Kantha.

> Whereas the original Declaration by His Majesty's Government on Constitutional Reform read out in the State Council on the 26th May, 1943, was declared by the Secretary of State for the Colonies and understood by the Board of Ministers and the people of this country to mean that if the Board of Ministers could produce a Constitution which in the opinion of a Commission or Conference, satisfies the conditions in paras. 2 to 6 thereof, and that the Constitution is subsequently accepted by three quarters of all the members of the State Council, excluding the Officers of State and the Speaker, His Majesty in Council will put that Constitution into operation and whereas the latest Declaration

of His Majesty's Government, made on July 5th, 1944, is a gross violation of that undertaking in that a Commission is to be sent out to explore the whole subject of Constitutional Reforms in Ceylon, this Congress fears that this is an attempt to take away from the people of Ceylon the undoubted right that they have to draft their own Constitution and to impose upon them a slave Constitution drafted by the foreign ruler, and calls upon the country and the State Council.

(a) To reject the Declaration made by His Majesty's Government on May 26th, 1943 and subsequent declaration ;

(b) To boycott such Commission or Conference ;

(c) To make a united demand for the immediate recognition of Ceylon's right to independence and for a free Constitution.

Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne moved an amendment to substitute the word "oppose" for the word "boycott." But the President announced that it was unconstitutional.

After Messrs. Harry Abeygunawardena, Premalal Kumarasiri, E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, G. C S. Corea, George E. de Silva, Dudley Senanayake, Pieter Keuneman and Anagarika Dharmapriya presented their views, the resolution was carried.

Mr. Jayantha Wirasekera moved :

With a view to making an united demand for the recognition of Ceylon's right to Independence and right to secure a free Constitution, this special sessions of the Congress authorises the Working Committee of the Ceylon National Congress to summon forthwith an All-Parties Conference.

Mr. K. M. Arnolis Perera seconded. The motion was carried. The house agreed that the following

not be tabled because the members were of the opinion that it was impossible to implement it in the present circumstances :—

> This Congress demands the immediate dissolution of the State Council and the holding of a general election on the issue of complete independence.

J. N. Jinendradasa, 21.2.1944
President.

J. R. Jayewardene,
H. A. Koattegoda,
Joint Hony. Secretaries.

D. Ceylon Daily News Report on the Sessions

Congress To Summon All-Parties Conference
Special Meeting Decides To Boycott Commission

A special session of the Ceylon National Congress held at the Town Hall on Saturday passed a resolution rejecting the Reforms Declaration of the Secretary of State and calling upon the country to boycott the Reforms Commission. A resolution was also passed authorising the Working Committee to convene an All-Parties Conference.

Mr. P. de S. Kularatne presided. Before proceeding to the business of the day, the chairman moved a vote of condolence on the death of Mr. Siripala Samarakkody, President of the Congress.

The motion was passed, all standing in silence.

The Chairman then explained the object of the meeting. Their object was simply to see that they united to secure a constitution of the kind they wanted. The minority communities were under a false belief that the Sinhalese were out for domination. It was their duty to dispel that belief—they could do that at a round table conference of all parties. So long as they gained their objective of independence, he did not care which community ruled this

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CDN, 4 September 1944.

country. He did not mind if they had a cabinet composed entirely of Tamils or entirely of Muslims.

Right To Independence

Mr. Gilbert Perera then moved the main resolution calling upon the country and the State Council (a) to reject the Declaration made by His Majesty's Government on May 26, 1943, and subsequent declarations; (b) to boycott such Commission or Conference; (c) to make a united demand for the immediate recognition of Ceylon's right to independence and for a free constitution.

Mr. Perera said that they must not expect to receive their independence as a gift but must secure it by their own effort. The latest Declaration of the Secretary of State was a manoeuvre to deprive them of it.

Mr. S. Sri Kantha (a Tamil delegate), speaking in Sinhalese, seconded the resolution. He said that the minority communities must not fall into the trap which was being laid to deprive the country of its rights.

Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne wished to know from gentlemen like Mr. G. C. S. Corea and Mr. Kularatne why they had not much earlier made an effort to bring about an understanding among all communities.

Mr. G. C. S. Corea said he was heartily in favour of an All Parties Conference. The question of whether the commission should be boycotted or not was a matter they should decide after such a conference. His own view was that there was no need for a Commission as proposed by the Secretary of State. He moved as an amendment that instead of deciding to boycott the Commission they should express their opposition to it.

Mr. George E. de Silva appealed to the meeting to give the Congress a mandate to summon a conference and arrive at an agreement. Mr. Dudley Senanayake said that they

could not as self-respecting people crawl before the Commission. If they could put forward a united demand there was no need for a Commission.

Alteration Ruled Out

Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne moved that the word "boycott" be substituted by the word "oppose." The chairman ruled that the amendment was out of order.

Mr. P. G. B. Keuneman said that the reason for opposing the word "boycott" was because they did not want that word to be misunderstood as meaning that they wanted to sit with folded arms and do nothing to counter imperial strategy. Mr. Kularatne pointed out that if they now altered that word it might be thought that they had "got frightened a bit."

The resolution was put to the meeting and carried unanimously.

The following resolution was also unanimously passed:

> With a view to make a united demand for the immediate recognition of Ceylon's right to independence and for a free Constitution this special sessions of the Congress authorises the Working Committee to summon forthwith an All-Parties Conference.

The meeting consented to the withdrawal of a resolution which was to be moved demanding the immediate dissolution of the State Council and the holding of a general election on the issue of complete independence.

E. Appendices to the Special Sessions

(1) Times Of Ceylon Editorial, 5 September 1944: "With Our Critics' Compliments"

Critics of "The Times of Ceylon" display a remarkable lack of originality in the accusations they bring against us. Their one cry repeated parrot-wise is that "The Times of Ceylon" is out to create dissension among the various

communities. *Six communities inhabit this island: Sinhalese*, Tamils, Muslims, Burghers, Indians and Europeans. Significantly enough, the charge that we are creating dissension does not emanate from the last five of the abovenamed communities, who are as intelligent as the first named to interpret our policy. To be fair to the Sinhalese, as a whole, it must be said that no member of that community, outside the narrow political caucus which is intent on domination of the rest, has joined in the parrot cry To that fact the outspoken letters of certain Sinhalese correspon*dents published recently bear testimony. The charge that* we are out to wreck national unity comes only from one political section Why it is made may be seen from an examination of the events of the past eight years. In 1936, seven Ministers, all of one race and with one exception in each case of one caste and one religion, took office According to their Leader this was "deliberately planned." All the other races, castes and creeds were kept out of the Ministerial Board. In face of this flagrant violation of democratic principles, what should have been the attitude of any honest newspaper? "The Times of Ceylon" would undoubtedly have won enthusiastic praise from the Ministers if it had lauded the formation of the "homogeneous" Board as a masterpiece of political planning. We however preferred to speak the truth and to point out that those who "deliberately planned" this communal coup had wrecked national unity by seeking the aggrandisement of their own community, caste and creed. On that occasion who was out to create a split among the communities—the Ministers who planned to keep all but one community out of the Board, or we who pointed out this blunder which, as the Governor has mentioned in his dispatch of 1938, has won the approval of "not a single Sinhalese leader ?"

We take another example: The one outstanding characteristic of the policy of the present Minister of Education has been his venom against the Christians. These Christians are not foreigners Nobody is better qualified to know this than Dr. Kannangara who was himself once a Christian. The main body of Christians in Ceylon are either Sinhalese or

Tamils. Many of them belong to families who have tenaciously clung to their faith for centuries in the teeth of persecution. Until the present phase of politics supervened, nobody had dared to pretend that the Christian Sinhalese and Christian Tamils are not true Sinhalese or true Tamils. The malevolent propaganda started in recent times with intent to portray the Christian Ceylonese as outside the national fold was a direct attempt to divide the Sinhalese and the Tamil communities on religious grounds. None of the so-called national leaders or organs of national opinion deprecate these ill-natured efforts to drive a sword of cleavage through these two communities. Forgetting that Christain Sinhalese leaders like Sir James Peiris, Mr. E. J. Samerawickrame, Mr. E. W. Perera and Mr. A. A. Wickremesinghe to quote only four names had much to do with the shaping of constitutional reforms along the right lines in the early days of the national movement, they observed a cowardly silence. A word in season might have stemmed the stream of abuse directed on a section of the community whose crime is that it is not prepared to sell its soul for political prizes. Our offence has been that we pointed out that the compaign against the Christians was inevitably tending to create a split within the Sinhalese majority. In this case, who was to blame—the men who carried on this campaign of bigotry, the leaders who did nothing to check it, or we who drew attention to the evil of splitting the community on religious grounds ?

We pass over many other instances and come to the latest example. When the Secretary of State requested the Ministers to frame their own constitution, we welcomed the great privilege accorded to them and wished them success in their endeavour. We bespoke for them the friendly assistance of all parties. In order that they might attain the maximum of agreement with the minimum of friction we suggested that they should win the support of all sections for their proposals and put forward an agreed plan. If that were done, we pointed out, the Secretary of State could not but agree to a scheme which was the fruit of common consent. What was Mr. Senanayake's reply to this reasonable

suggestion ? That "The Times of Ceylon" wanted to set the communities fighting against each other. To avert such a fight he and his friends conceived their scheme in secret, keeping the minorities as well as the rest of the public in the dark. Finding that the Secretary of State will accept no scheme which has not the approval of the minorities, the Ministers have withdrawn their draft and threaten non-co-operation. The Sinhalese Congress however at its meeting last Saturday unanimously passed a resolution in favour of an All-Parties Conference to frame a new constitution. When we made a similar proposal, Mr. Senanayake thought we wanted to start a communal dog-fight The Sinhalese Congress makes the identical proposal, after the Tamils, the Muslims and the Europeans have made it, at a meeting where a speaker declared that "The Times of Ceylon is out to create a split among the communities." The abuse heaped upon us by the Ministers and their followers does not irk us in the least. They are welcome to it so long as they pay us the compliment, as the Congress has now done, of adopting our suggestions, however belatedly.

(2) Times of Ceylon Report on the Inaugural Meeting of the All-Ceylon Tamil Congress, c. 4 September 1944[1]

Balance Of Power As Solution

All-Ceylon Tamil Congress's Aims And Objects

The canon that Ceylon's new constitution should be so framed as to prevent any single race, community or class from dominating or imposing its will over the others was accepted at the inaugural meeting of the All-Ceylon Tamil Congress, held at the Jaffna Town Hall. Mr G. G. Ponnambalam was elected President of the Congress, and a statement of aims and objects was approved.

There was a large and representative gathering present and on the motion of Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam, M. S. C., Dr. S. Subramaniam presided and others accommodated on the platform were Messrs. Ponnambalam, S. Natesan, M. S. C., J. Tyagaraja, M. S. C., K. Balasingham, the Rev. James

1. *Times of Ceylon*, 5 September 1944.

ιather, Dr. C. Sivasithamparam, Messrs T. M. Sabaratnam, . V. Kulasingham, R. Sivagurunather, T. Muttusamypillai, . C. Proctor, P. Mortimer, A. R. Subramaniam, K. K. Nata-ιjan, and K. V. Balasingham. Messrs. S. N. Rajadurai and Ir. Karulasingham were elected secretaries.

Dr. Subramaniam said the most pressing problem at the resent moment was the question of the reform of the onstitution, including the matter of representation in the egislature. This could be solved either by directly nego-ating with the parties concerned or by acting through me bodies like the Congress they proposed to form. "I nnot for the present think of any other method," he said. I admit, at least theoretically, that negotiaiton is the etter and more pleasant procedure of the two. The inter-ention of a third party is avoided and we do not contra-ct ourselves by admitting our inability to settle our fferences and at the same time asking the third party to cognize our ability to manage our affairs. This is true in eory only."

Only Talk Of Negotiations

" In practice, as negotiation is always conditional and also pecially as things are at present in Ceylon, there is very tle hope of success in this direction. The requisite con-tions for successful negotiation are co-operation and rmula. All parties must co-operate without any mental servation. One party alone cannot co-operate.

I thought and still think that there are capable and usted leaders among the different communities in the and who could exert their influence and bring about a ttlement. But even in their case the process of nego-ation, as far as we all know, has not advanced far. They ly talk of negotiations. But what is the use of talk without tion ? So the other only alternative left to us is to ganize ourselves into a body and to act through it.

It is clear that unity in multiplicity is the principle that ould guide the deliberations of this Congress, that is to y, when it speaks and when it acts it speaks and acts as

what its members actually are—as Tamils. But what seeks is the ideal, unity of all the people of the Island. He actuality and ideality are combined and we see that this the whole [*sic* ?] point of view that is conducive to sanity

Balanced representation would appear to me to be th sovereign remedy for most of the ills that Ceylon is sufferin from. Unless the principle that no community should b permitted to dominate over the others is fully concede and reflected in the new constitution, there will be [*sic*] re happiness, contentment and goodwill among the people Ceylon.

In conclusion, may I be permitted to hope and wish tha the Tamils as a whole will support the Congress, and mai tain the organization from generation to generation so tha we can give our best in the service of our community an country, which I trust and pray in the not distant futur will occupy an honoured place among the nations of th world with grace of Almighty Providence "

The Resolution

Mr. A. V. Kulasingham, advocate, moved a resolutio welcoming the immediate formation of the All-Ceylo Tamil Congress to safeguard and protect the political right and economic interests of all sections of the Tamil com munity in Ceylon whose unity and indivisibility based o a common racial and cultural heritage should be recog nised and whose disabilities should be removed withou delay. Dr. C. Sivasithamparam seconded.

Mr. C. T. Navaratnam, Proctor, inquired from the co veners of the meeting what immediate necessity there wa to embrace the Indians in Ceylon within their fold at tha critical moment. The Indians had their own associatio to look after their interests.

There were shouts of "sit down" and "get out." M Navaratnam was compelled to resume his seat.

The resolution was put to the house and carried, on voting against.

Mr. A. R. Supramaniam proposed and Mr. T. M. Sabaratnam seconded:

> This meeting reaffirms the demand of the community that any constitution to subserve all sections of the population should be so framed as to prevent any single race, community or class from dominating or imposing its will over the others.

Mr. K. Balasingham, the former Legislative Councillor, in supporting the resolution, said that in the present circumstances it was necessary that there should be fifty-fifty representation. Territorial representation alone would not be conducive to the best interests of all communities.

The following resolution was also passed:

> This meeting resolves that any agreed constitution suggested by the Sinhalese leaders or Ministers should be acceptable to all sections of the people of the Island and be accepted or rejected on behalf of the Tamils at the plenary sessions of the All-Ceylon Tamil Congress.

Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam, who supported the resolution, said that the Tamils should not be dominated by the Sinhalese.

Mr. J. Tyagaraja said that they were assembled that day in the most difficult moment in the history of the Tamil race—in the political history of the island. The Commission that was coming would decide their destiny for hundreds of years. He hoped that before long every Tamil would be a member of the Congress. Mr. Tyagaraja said that balanced representation had been approved by their dead leaders and by those who were alive today.

Aims And Objects

Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam moved and Mr. I. P. Thurairatnam seconded the adoption of the tentative draft statement of the aims and objects of the All-Ceylon Tamil Congress. —Carried.

The aims and objects of Congress were set out in this statement as: The attainment of Swarajyam for Ceylon;

the recognition of the sovereignty of the people of Ceylon by the establishment of a free constitution based on the just principle of democratic equality under which no single race, community, class or such other group will be in a position to dominate over the others; the establishment of political equality for all sections of the population of the island; the recognition of the cultural autonomy of all the communities in the island; the recognition of the right of self-determination for the people of Ceylon; the promotion and maintenance of goodwill and co-operation with the other communities of the island in the interests of national solidarity; the cultivation of close and friendly relations and the promotion of political and economic collaboration with the people of India; the maintenance of friendly relations and cultural contacts with the peoples of Great Britain and of the other progressive countries of the world; the recognition of the dignity and personality of man and the removal of all forms of disability and inequality; the recognition of the unity and indivisibility of the Tamil people in Ceylon based on a common racial and cultural heritage; to preserve and develop the Tamil language and literature; to spread Tamil culture and ideals; to promote the industrial and agricultural development of the Island based on a scientifically planned and co-ordinated economy; to obtain a living wage for labour; to raise the standard of living for the people; to establish social security and equality of opportunity for the people; to work for universal free education based on sound principles; to abolish all social inequalities; to remove any unjust disabilities which may prevent the Indians resident in Ceylon from discharging their obligations and exercising their rights as members of the body politic; and generally to promote and safeguard the cultural, economic and political interests of the Tamils for the purpose of the common weal.

On a motion from the chair the meeting approved the election of Mr. Ponnambalam as President of the Congress.

41. TWENTY SIXTH ANNUAL SESSIONS, 27-28 JANUARY 1945

A. AGENDA : RESOLUTIONS

A. International :

(1) This 25th [*sic*] Sessions of the Ceylon National Congress condemns Nazism, Fascism, Imperialism and all other forms of subjugation and exploitation of one nation by another. It sends its greetings to all peoples fighting for their freedom. It urges the British Government to take steps to end the present deadlock in India and enable India to form her own national government.

B. Political :

(2) This Sessions reiterates its demand for recognition by the British Government, of Lanka's right to independence and a free constitution.

(3) Whereas the decision of the State Council "to frame a Constitution of the Dominion type for a Free Lanka," falls short of the full national right for freedom, nevertheless, this Congress instructs its Members in the State Council to support the bill providing, "a new Constitution for a Free Lanka" as an advance in our struggle for freedom and to incorporate in it a solution of the minority problem, in accordance with the directions of the All Ceylon Congress Committee, because,

(*a*) This bill is an advance inasmuch as it rejects the Reforms Declaration of 1943.

(*b*) The rejection of the Reforms Declaration is the immediate rallying point for the unification of all sections of the people for winning Lanka's Freedom in a free world.

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1. From C. N. A., 60/73 ; a pamphlet of 4 pages. A Sinhalese pamphlet is also available.

(c) The decision to introduce such a bill was passed by the State Council without a single elected representative voting against it.

(d) The bill is an expression, through the State Council, of the right of the people to draft their own Constitution, as opposed to the Imperialist Policy of denying such a right and imposing a slave constitution.

(4) Whereas the Congress has rejected the Reforms Declaration of May 1943, and as the Soulbury Commission's terms of reference do not go beyond this Declaration, this Sessions reaffirms its decision to boycott the said Commission and further appeals to all freedom loving organisations and individuals not to make representations to this Commission, but to unite in a common demand for freedom.

C. Indians and Other Nationals:

(5) Whereas there is no law defining Ceylon citizenship and the status of Indians and other nationals in Ceylon, this Sessions is of opinion that legislation should be introduced immediately,

(a) Completely prohibiting immigration into Ceylon,

(b) Defining Ceylon citizenship; and making it possible for the nationals of India and of other countries in Ceylon, who renounce their political and citizenship rights in their respective countries, to make Ceylon their permanent home, and give proof of such intentions, according to tests agreed to between the parties concerned in Ceylon, to be deemed Ceylonese, for all purposes including the present Ordinances.

(6) This Sessions is also of opinion that legislation should be introduced,

(a) Requiring all non-Ceylonese who start or have started commercial, banking, agricultural industrial or other enterprises to raise 50% of their capital, and appoint ½ their directorate, from Ceylonese.

(b) Compelling the employment in all businesses of 75% Ceylonese employees.

D. Trade, etc.

(7) This Sessions is of opinion that there should be an immediate reduction in the control price of textile piece-goods and that steps should be taken to enact rationing of textiles.

(8) This Sessions is of opinion that trade should be controlled by the Government in the interests of the co-operative movement, even after the war.

(9) In view of the alarming reports of very unsatisfactory conditions prevailing in the Agricultural Corps and the vast expenditure of public funds in this connection with very little or no results, this Congress demands that a Special Committee of the State Council should forthwith be appointed to investigate and report on the whole question of the Agricultural Corps and its expenditure, so that the country may reap the benefit of this great project.

E. Declaration on Representation in a Free and United Lanka:

(1) The Congress creed is freedom for Lanka. It is pledged to secure a united demand for recognition of independence and a free constitution.

(2) However, the Congress cannot think in terms of winning freedom without dispelling from the minds of the minorities the fear that the Sinhalese people will use their predominant majority against the democratic rights and national existence of the minorities.

(3) The Congress recognises that a Free Lanka can only be built on the secure basis of independence from the foreign ruler, of equality of nationalities and of common interest, goodwill and trust.

(4) The Congress declares that the constitution of a Free and United Lanka should ensure the democratic principles of (a) the equality of citizens and (b) the equality of, and non-domination as between, nationalities.

(5) The Congress further declares that in such a free, united and democratic Lanka,

(a) The rights of nationalities regarding their language, culture, education, schools and freedom of religious worship will be guaranteed by statute. Similarly, all privileges and discriminations based on caste, race and community will be abolished by statute and any infringement of the above will be made a penal offence;

(b) Those Indians and the nationals of other countries in Ceylon, who are prepared to adopt Ceylon as their permanent home, and give proof of such intentions, will be given full citizenship rights. Ceylon will of course, have the right to control further immigration according to her own national interests.

(6) It will be the constant aim and endeavour of the Congress to win the various peoples of Ceylon to acceptance of the aforesaid democratic principles so that, by the common effort, can be secured that freedom of Mother Lanka to which it, and they, are in heart and mind dedicated.

F. Declaration of Fundamental Rights:

This 25th [*sic*] Sessions of the Ceylon National Congress is of opinion that to enable the masses to appreciate what "freedom" means, it is desirable to state that the Congress desires political freedom in order to end the exploitation of the masses, ensuring real economic

the thousands who now live on the border line of starvation. The Congress therefore declares that in the Constitution of a Free Lanka the following fundamental rights and duties should be included.

(1) Every citizen has the right of free expression of opinion, the right of free association and combination, and the right to assemble peacefully and without arms.

(2) Every citizen shall enjoy freedom of conscience and the right freely to profess and practise his religion.

(3) The culture, language and script of the minorities shall be protected.

(4) All citizens are equal before the law irrespective of religion, caste, race, or sex and no disability attaches in regard to public employment by reason of such difference.

(5) All citizens have equal rights and duties in regard to wells, tanks, roads, schools, cemeteries and places of public resort maintained out of the State or local funds.

(6) Every citizen has the right to keep and bear arms in accordance with regulations and reservations made in that behalf.

(7) No person shall be deprived of his liberty nor shall his dwelling or property be entered, segregated or confiscated save in accordance with law.

(8) The State shall observe neutrality in regard to all religions.

(9) The franchise shall be on the basis of Universal Adult Suffrage.

(10) The State shall provide free, compulsory education.

Labour:

(11) The organisation of economic life must seek to secure a decent standard of living.

(12) The State shall safeguard the interests of industrial workers and shall secure for them by suitable legislation and in other ways, a living wage, healthy conditions of work, limited hours of labour, suitable machinery for

the settlement of disputes between employers and workmen, and protection against the economic consequences of old age, sickness and unemployment.

(13) Labour to be freed from serfdom and conditions bordering on serfdom.

(14) Protection of women workers, especially adequate provision for leave and maternity benefits during maternity period.

(15) Children of school-going age shall not be employed in mines and factories.

(16) Peasants and workers shall have the right to form unions to protect their interests.

Taxation and Expenditure:

(17) Income Tax, Death Duties and the abolition of indirect taxation and of import duties on essential food to be part of the financial structure.

(18) No duty to be levied on salt manufactured in Ceylon.

(19) Expenditure and salaries in civil departments shall be largely reduced. No servant of the State other than specially employed experts and the like shall be paid above a certain fixed figure, which should not ordinarily exceed Rs. 1000 per month.

Land:

(20) Compulsory acquisition of private lands on payment of compensation, where land is necessary for village expansion, the establishment of state and collective farms and other national needs.

(21) Relief of agricultural indebtedness and control of usury-direct and indirect.

Economic Social:

(22) The State shall protect indigenous industries against foreign competition and prepare a programme for the industrialisation of the country.

in connection with the 25th [*sic*] annual sessions of our Congress, to be held on the 27th and 28th instant at the Colombo Town Hall.

(1) Resolution C. 5 (*a*) For "Completely prohibiting immigration into Ceylon" substitute "Controlling immigration into Ceylon in the national interests of Ceylon."

(2) Resolution C. 6 (*b*) Amend "Compelling the employment in all businesses of 75% Ceylonese employees" to read. "Compelling the employment in all businesses employing 5 or more persons of 75% Ceylonese employees within a specified period."

(3) *Resolution F.* Para 17 to be reformulated to read: "Income Tax and Death duties shall be part of the financial structure. Indirect taxation and import duties on essential foodstuffs shall be abolished." The present formulation is confusing. Para 21 to be amended to include "Control of agricultural rent." A new paragraph to be added to the section on land with the words "Abolition of all forms of feudalism in the countryside."

Yours fraternally,
Signed: P. G. B. Keuneman,

P. S. With regard to the changes in the Constitution, I move that the word "party" be deleted from the name of the Congress as suggested and accepted at the Working Committee.

From C. Navaratnam of the Colombo South Congress Association

Recd. 7 p.m. 26.1.45.
Signed: J. R. J.

The Hon. Secretary,
The Ceylon National Congress,
Colombo.

Dear Sir,

I am directed by my Committee to give you notice that Mr. C. Navaratnam will move that the word "Indians" be

deleted whenever it occurs in Sec. C. subsec. 5 & 6 of the Congress resolution to be moved on the 26th of Jan. 1945.

Signed: C. V. de Silva,
Hon. Secretary.
26.1.45

The Colombo South Association.

From J. R. de Silva of the Colombo South Congress Association

Mr. J. R. de Silva will move that the words "other essentials" be added on after the words "textile price goods" in sec. (?) sub-section (7)

Signed: C. V. de Silva,
Hon. Secretary,
Col. South Congress Association.
26.1.45.

C. Minutes of the Sessions

The minutes in brief of the [twenty sixth] annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held on the 27-28 January, 1945 at the Town Hall, Colombo.

Presidential Procession: At 3.30 p.m. Saturday the 27th January the national freedom procession consisting of a large crowd of over 5,000 people set off from Tillekaratnaramaya, Borella and proceeded to the Congress office premises. From there, the procession conducted the President-elect, Mr. George E. de Silva, along the tram car route in Maradana towards the Town Hall. The procession, which was about two and a half miles long, was accompanied by elephants, drummers, national flags, and slogans, and was organised by the Colombo National Congress Association and other workers' associations. The procession included a number of Muslim women and other women who marched along shouting "We do not want Soulbury, what we want is freedom." The

reached the Town Hall at about 6.30 p.m. At the Town Hall premises the President hoisted the national flag while the gathering sang the national song. *Muhandiram* P. Wakwella read out a paper in appreciation of the work done by the Congress and offered it in a silver casket to the President. Thereafter the gathering entered the hall and was received by Mr. A. Ratnapala, the Chairman of the Reception Committee, who delivered an address welcoming them.

Presidential Address: The President delivered an eloquent speech that successfully directed the attention of all those present towards independence for Ceylon. His speech ended at 7.30 p.m.

Business Sessions: The business sessions commenced after the presidential address.[1]

Mr. P. de S. Kularatne moved the first resolution [A 1 on the agenda.] Mr. K. Rajaratnam seconded and the resolution was adopted.

Mr. G. C. S. Corea proposed, and Mr. P. Givendrasinghe seconded, the resolution [B2 on the agenda]. Carried unanimously.

Mr. Gilbert Perera proposed, and Mr. A. Ratnapala seconded, the resolution [B3 on the agenda]. After a lengthy discussion the resolution was adopted with a majority supporting it.

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene proposed, and Mr. H. A. Koattegoda seconded, the resolution [B 4 on the agenda]. It was carried.

Mr. H. A. Koattegoda proposed the *motion* [C 5 *on* the agenda]. Mr. J. R. Jayewardene seconded. Mr. C. Navaratnam moved an amendment to delete the clause "Indians and other nationals." It was seconded by Mr. Gilbert Perera. Mr. Pieter Keuneman moved an amendment to include the words "In the national interests of Ceylon, the number of immigrants coming for employment should be

1. The minutes reproduce the resolutions which have already been printed under the "Agenda." I have therefore taken the liberty of summarising the minutes by providing the identification number of the resolutions.

restricted." The mover of the original resolution accepted these suggestions and the original resolution, amended in this manner, was adopted.

Mr. H. A. Koattegoda proposed, and Mr. J. R. Jayewardene seconded, the resolution [C 6 on the agenda] Mr. C. Navaratnam moved an amendment: "All industries in which more than 5 non-Ceylonese are employed, should take 75% Ceylonese employees." Mr. K. Rajaratnam seconded. The amended resolution was adopted.

Mr. H. A. Koattegoda proposed, and Mr. J. R. Jayewardene seconded, the resolution [D 7 on the agenda]. It was adopted. The resolution [D 8, which was moved] by Mr. D. Peter Perera, was also adopted.

Mr. Jayantha Wirasekera moved the resolution [D 9 on the agenda]. Mr. P. Galoluwa seconded. After a lengthy discussion the majority voted in favour of this motion

Mr. P. D. S. Jayasekera proposed the resolution [E 1-6] which was a "Declaration on Representation in a Free and United Lanka." It was adopted.

[The resolution F 1-25 was presented by the President and was postponed for discussion by the ACCC and the Working Committee. The fate of resolution G is not clarified].

J. R. Jayewardene,
H. A. Koattegoda,
Hony. Joint Secretaries.

D. George E. de Silva's Presidential Address[1]

Friends and Fellow Delegates,

It is a great honour to officiate as the President of the Ceylon National Congress at this its 25th [*sic*] sessions.

1. C. N. A., 60/109; a leaflet of 8 pages with his photograph on page one. A Sinhalese version, sans photograph, was also printed. The English version has numerous spelling mistakes which I have corrected.

Twenty-five years is a very short space in the life of a ancient people whose history goes back to the sixth century B.C. Yet these 25 years have been of tremendous significance in our history.

It was on the 2nd of March 1815, that we lost our independence. Year after year, throughout the centuries, we had defended our island-home against foreign invaders. From the 16th century onwards, we fought a ceaseless and desperate struggle against the most powerful nations in the world : the Portuguese, the Dutch and the English. We beat them back. We were never conquered and our freedom as a nation remained. Finally in 1815 the exhaustion caused by years of war compelled us to choose George the 3rd as our King, instead of King Sir Wickrama Rajasingha.

Almost 100 years later, the Congress was established to regain our lost independence and also to obtain redress for the injustices perpetrated against us during the dark days of 1915. Those injustices awakened the leaders of the country to the urgent need for obtaining control of the government of the country. In December 1918 the leaders of our nation met in conference and decided to form an organization to secure "a reform of the Constitution with a view to the realization of a responsible Government in the country as an integral part of the British Empire."

One year later the first sessions of the Ceylon National Congress was held under the Presidentship of that distinguished leader, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam. The Congress at that sessions passed what was then considered an extreme and an extravagant demand, namely :

(*a*) that the Legislative Council should consist of about 50 members of whom at least four-fifths should be elected on a territorial basis under a wide male franchise ;

(*b*) that the Council should be given full control of the nation's budget ;

(*c*) that the Executive Council should consist of Unofficial Members as well ; and

(*d*) that no less than 50 per cent, rising up to 75 per cent, of the higher appointments in the Ceylon Civil Service and other departments of the Public Services should be reserved for Ceylonese.

The efforts of the Congress were partially successful. In 1920 elected members were included in the Legislative Council and in 1924, for the first time, there was an unofficial majority in the country's Legislature. Congressmen contested these elections and were returned in large numbers. They were given the power of criticism and of making suggestions but had no other influence over the management of the country's affairs and were entrusted with no higher responsibilities. They, therefore, persisted in their demands for an increase of their powers.

The Donoughmore Commissioners who came to the Island in 1927 sought to give the people a further measure of reforms. Congress spokesmen appeared before the Commission and asked for full self-government. A comprehensive scheme for a new constitution was prepared by the Congress and presented to the Commission. [It] made provision for an Executive of elected members responsible [to] a Legislative; this Executive was to be the Board of Ministers with individual Ministers in charge of the subjects of Home Affairs, Finance, Justice, Education, Agriculture, Industries, Health, Public Works and Communications. Members were to be elected and four-fifth of them were to represent territorial electorates.

We are all familiar with the recommendations of the Donoughmore Commission for we still live in what may be termed the "Donoughmore Era." The Congress accepted the new Constitution though it did not come up to their expectations and again many Congressmen were elected to the Council and the Board of Ministers. It was during this critical period, when the Congress was divided and nearly destroyed on the issue whether or not the Donoughmore Constitution should be accepted that I had the privilege of being elected its President. Within a few weeks of my election some of the most influential of the Congress leaders

and men who had been members of it from its inception left it. Those who left maintained that the Donoughmore Constitution did not grant full responsible government in accordance with the demand of the Congress. They were followed by the people of Jaffna. I maintained, however, that we should accept the Constitution because it marked a definite advance and prepared the way for further constitutional progress by the abolition of communal representation and by the grant of universal adult franchise. The Constitution was a novel experiment and the opinion of the most enlightened authorities on constitutional law was that the Donoughmore Constitution was unworkable and could not assist in the solution of the island's problems and would collapse.

In spite of these dismal prophesies the Constitution was accepted by those of us who had faith in the capacity of the people of this country to manage their own affairs and were animated by the prospect of serving the people of our country. We accepted the Constitution and worked it to the best of our ability in order to promote the well-being of our people.

During these years the Congress met annually and continued to work for the welfare of the people by taking an active interest in all public questions. The elections to the second State Council took place in 1935 and once again many Congressmen were returned. The assumption of office by Congressmen seriously impaired the efforts of the Congress towards the attainment of its goal as some of its most active members were preoccupied with the responsibility of office.

The Board of Ministers elected in 1935 [*sic*] consisted entirely of Congressmen. Six of the seven Ministers were either former Presidents of Congress or Chairmen of Congress Reception Committees. In this country our truculent and obstreperous critics have chosen to cite this as an instance of domination. Elsewhere, in the West for example this would have been described as the most perfect justification for democracy.

As the years went by the Congress and the newer political parties, which, like it, were dedicated to the attainment of the country's freedom, maintained a ceaseless agitation for further reforms and in [sic] the improvement of the Donoughmore Constitution. During that period many young men deeply imbued with the spirit of service joined the Congress and began intensive work in the villages and the towns educating the people, workers and peasants alike, to a realization of their political rights.

The 21st [sic] sessions of Congress was held in the village of Mirigama and together with it a Swadeshi Exhibition was organized. The message of Congress spread by degrees to villages. As the people of this country gained greater experience in the administration of their own affairs and proved their competence to discharge the responsibilities that have been assigned to them, the Congress altered its demand from responsible government to dominion status and in December 1942, at the sessions held at Kelaniya, it pledged itself to achieve freedom.

Today we stand pledged to strive for freedom. Nothing less than that can be accepted. We have good reason for making this demand. We have not chosen to bargain. The freedom of a people is not bought and sold. It is only earned. We claim that our record of achievement during the past 13 years, and specially during the 5 years of travail through which the world has passed and from which it has not yet emerged, has earned us our freedom and that if it is to be denied us at this stage it will be a violation of those high principles and ideals, for the protection and preservation of which, the leaders of the United Nations have led us to believe this war is being fought.

We claim, like every civilized people, the right of self-determination as a single country and as a single nation; the right to have an unfettered control over foreign affairs, defence, finance and domestic policies.

When the British Government entered this war, Ceylon followed her unhesitatingly and unconditionally, because we placed our trust in those exalted professions of "

for All" to which the leaders of the United Nations gave such vehement and dramatic expression. We believed that the rule of force was to be extinguished and that the liberal doctrine propounded by the United Nations in the hour of their peril and our's would be saved from extinction, to illumine the Post-War world. We dared to hope that the people of the British Empire, who had not yet been given full control of their affairs, would at last be benefited by the new and enlightened policy which had been enunciated by their rulers.

We have been sadly disillusioned. The regret need not all be our's. I am sure that if the people of Ceylon had the choice again they would not waver in their loyalty to [those] principles for which the Leaders of the United Nations proposed to stand, even if experience has proved that the solemn pledges given by the Leaders of England were not to be fulfilled. This loyalty is engendered by our faith in these principles and ideals which alone we feel can save the human race from complete destruction. Not only has the British Government failed to guarantee us the freedom offered to India and to Burma, but it has even chosen, by clever words, to repudiate the Declaration of 1943.

The Congress was prepared to accept a constitution drafted according to the Ministers' interpretation of that Declaration, provided such a constitution was put into immediate operation, and the grant of full freedom after the war was guaranteed. We now find that the whole question of constitutional reforms has been reopened by the appointment of a Reform Committee with a limited scope of investigation. The Ministers were therefore compelled to withdraw their constitutional scheme as they could not undertake the responsibility of securing a three-fourths majority for a constitution drafted by the Reform Commissioners. They rightly felt that this disingenious pretext was being adopted to cloud the issue and to delay the submission of the Minister's draft to the State Council.

There were elements, even among the people whom we would wish to call our own, who, with alacrity, joined the reactionary group that applauded this move on the part of

the Imperial Government. The Congress was again the first body to call public attention to this breach of faith, and *in July 1944, unanimously decided* to boycott the Reforms Commission. Teeir [*sic*] was earlier at its 22nd [*sic*] sessions at Dummaladeniya, in 1941 when a Reforms Commission was first mentioned the Congress decided to boycott it. Our resolution of last year was the logical sequence to our previous decision. The Congress which stands for freedom cannot crawl before a Commission whose terms of reference do not go beyond internal self-government. We must, however, remnid ourselves that our freedom must be secured by our own efforts. Disunity among our people must certainly be an impediment to progress. That is a truism. In order to achieve unity and to win for the cause of freedom the support of those who seem to have chosen a les honourable destiny for our country, Congress accepted its resolution of non-domination as between communities and summoned an All-Parties Conference.

A rancorous voice is endeavouring to spread disaffection among the people in this country, and to divide us with proclamations for the attainment of selfish objects for those [*sic*] it represents of theories specially invented to give democracy in the East a new meaning and a new terminology. Our's is no novel experience. It is the experience of all people who endevour to substitute self-government for foreign rule that the presence of a reactionary third party in their midst tends to ferment disunity and prevent the attainment of complete unity among the people who are claiming the right of self-determination. Reactionaries will be found everywhere resorting to every expedient that could delay and hamper political and social reform and progress. They are the most dangerous enemies of any country. They are the most formidable foes we have to face. These difficulties should however strengthen our determination to strive towards the objective we have set ourselves. Congress therefore seeks to bring into being a mass movement for the attainment of that objective, to teach the people that freedom means a new and better economic and social order. These are not vague promises intended to win

England, the land of freedom, has laid down true democ ratic principles.

America is the land of the noble free.

In 1833, Sir Alexander Johnston said that Ceylon was fit for home rule. In 1928, the Labour Party declared that Ceylon was fit for full responsible government and that she should be the first in the Far East who should get full responsible government.

When Hitler tried to destroy the freedom of Europe, England was the first to declare war against Hitler in the assertion of freedom.

When this happened we in Ceylon decided to follow the noble example of England with a united front to defeat Hitler. Then, war was 6,000 miles away from Ceylon.

When Japan, without any declaration, started aggression in the East, war was brought nearer. Then the people of Ceylon realized that they were not 6,000 miles away from war, but that they were in the actual theatre of war. Ceylon, realizing what freedom means, joined in a united defence to repel the aggressors. When Malaya, Dutch Indias, Indo-China and Singapore fell into the hands of the Japanese we knew that our fate would be the same unless we put up a united defence. When the Japanese bombs fell in April 1942, people were bewildered and ran hither and thither. The leaders of Ceylon, including the Ministers, had to appeal to the people to stand together and put on a united front to repel any instrusion into this country by the enemy. This was done and the whole country rallied round this call and put forward an excellent defence which in turn bewildered the enemy. Countries like Singapore, Dutch Indies and Burma had fifth columnists who supported the Japanese. Just before the Japanese bombs fell in Ceylon the country had hardly any defence. But soon afterwards things began to change and assumed such formidable proportion that it evoked the admiration of the whole world.

When the Japanese learned that Ceylonese were not made of the same material like those of the countries which Japan had conquered, the attempt of [sic] conquering this country was given up. Supply of food was cut off and Ceylon was in a bad condition. All our appeals to our neighbouring countries did not help us much. We had to organize ourselves to meet another difficult situation and we just managed to turn the corner. Thanks to the foresight of all those who were in charge of the affiairs in Ceylon, not a single person had the misfortune of dying of hunger nor was there any one who starved in Ceylon. But look at our neighbouring country with all her resources where over a million people died of famine Apart from this, fighting units and servicemen had their headquarters here. Epidemics of infectious diseases occurred in the island, but they have been duly suppressed and the health of the people were well maintained. In the meantime the civil government carried on as usual guaranteeing the safely and security of the people of the country. There was no occasion to declare martial law here in the midst of all this turmoil and the government was carried on as usual.

We hold these truths to be self-evident that all men are created equals, that they are endowed by their creator with certain inalienable rights. Among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. To secure these rights governments are instituted among man, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. Every man and everybody on earth possesses the right of self-government. The law of the majority is the natural law of every society of men.

In order to achieve this noble object, we want freedom for the people of this country. That freedom is sought not to destroy this happiness of the people, but to make them co-partners with other nations. Mother Lanka calls her sons and daughtres to rally round her to win this freedom that was lost and to establish a new era, by restoring to this country its past glory.[1]

1. In the Sinhalese version the last paragraph has been omitted and two verses substituted.

E. Extract from Ceylon Observer Report on the First Day's Proceedings[1]

Cannot "Crawl Before Commission"

"The Congress which stands for freedom cannot crawl before a commission whose terms of reference do not go beyond internal self-government," said Mr. George E. de Silva yesterday evening in his presidential address at the 25th [*sic*] anniversary sessions of the Ceylon National Congress, at the Colombo Town Hall.

"Today we stand pledged to strive for freedom. Nothing less than that can be accepted", he said.

Mr. de Silva, as President-elect, was conducted in a procession which, starting from the Tillekaratnaramaya, Borella, followed a route over three miles long, via Maradana Road and Deen's Road to the Town Hall. A large throng of men and women, carrying a forest of banners and placards bearing slogans demanding "Freedom for Lanka," participated in the procession. It was headed by a troupe of Kandyan dancers and interspersed among the crowd were a half a dozen elephants.

On the arrival of the procession outside the Town Hall the Congress flag was hoisted by the President-elect who himself led in the singing of the national song. At the end of this ceremony, *Muhandiram* P. Wakwella read and presented to Mr. de Silva an address enclosed in a silver cylindrical casket, on behalf of the Jatika Eksath Karake Mandalaya, Colombo.

With a gathering which packed the hall, the Congress sessions were formally opened a short while later with an adress of welcome by Dr. A. Ratnapala, Chairman of the Reception Committee.

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1. *Ceylon Observer*, 28 January, 1945.

Dr. Ratnapala said they must not chastise but pity those people who were going before the Soulbury Commission. That was not a Commission which was going to bring freedom to this country.

F. Times of Ceylon Reports on the Sessions[1]

Congress Beats "Free Lanka" Drum

Nothing Less, President Declares

The 25th [*sic*] annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress was held at the Colombo Town Hall yesterday afternoon. Mr. George E. de Silva, Minister of Health, the President, was brought in procession along Ward Place from Borella. A very large gathering was present.

[Here follow extracts from Mr. George E. de Silva's address].

The first resolution, proposed by Mr P. de S. Kularatne and seconded by Mr. K. Rajaratnam, of Kandy, condemned Nazism, Fascism, Imperialism and all other forms of subjugation and exploitation of one nation by another, and while sending its greetings to all peoples fighting for their freedom, urged the British Government to take steps to end the present deadlock in India to enable her to form her own national government.

Mr. G. C. S. Corea proposed and Mr. P. Givendrasinghe seconded a resolution demanding a "Free Lanka."

The bill before the State Council, Mr. Corea said, was an advance inasmuch as it rejected the Reforms Declaration of 1943. The rejection of that Declaration was the immediate rallying point for the unification of all sections of the people for winning Lanka's freedom in a free world. The bill was an expression, through the State Council, of the right of

1. *Times of Ceylon*, 28 and 29 January, 1945 respectively.

the people to draft their own constitution, as opposed to tl imperialist policy of denying such a right and imposing slave constitution.

Mr. Pieter Keuneman, General Secretary of the Comm nist Party of Ceylon, supporting, said that there was 1 difference of opinion between Communists and no Communists in Congress regarding freedom for tl country.

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene proposed a resolution reiteratir the decision to boycott the Soulbury Commission.

Although daily a certain class of men from all commun ties crawled before Lord Soulbury and his colleagues ever morning, it was significant that the real representatives (the masses had not yet gone there, he said.

Mr. H. A. Koattegoda seconded the resolution, which wa supported by Dr. S. A. Wickremasinghe and Mr. Sri Kanth of Jaffna, who spoke in English.

Mr. Peter Perera proposed that trade should be controlle by Government in the interests of the co-operative move ment even after the war. Mr. Chandra Jayewarden seconded.

Land Army Affairs

Congress Demands Special Enquiry

When the 25th [*sic*] session of the Ceylon Nationa Congress was resumed at the Colombo Town Hall yesterday Mr. Gilbert Perera proposed a resolution calling upo Congress members in the State Council to support th "Free Lanka" bill.

Dr. A. Ratnapala seconded the resolution. Mr. Pieter Keuneman, on behalf of the Communist Party, said that the acid test for getting freedom today was to unify their forces and to prevent people going before the Soulbury Commission as much as possible. They had always realised that the bill before the Council was premature but they

did not oppose it because it would draw the people away first from the Declaration and next from the Soulbury Commission.

Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa, supporting the resolution, charged the Europeans in the Island with changing fronts since the *Donoughmore Commission*. Then the Europeans, pointing out that the franchise was low, wished it extended. Now that it had been extended they still found fault with it saying that the franchise was too wide.

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene said that the acceptance of the bill before the State Council became necessary only as a manoeuvre in the battle for freedom.

Several members opposed the resolution as being a retrograde step.

The resolution was carried by a majority, the Communist delegates refraining from voting.

Mr. H. A. Koattegoda moved a resolution calling for the introduction of legislation defining Ceylon citizenship and the status of Indians and other nationals in Ceylon, prohibiting immigration to Ceylon, making it possible for Indians and other nationals who renounce their political and citizenship rights in their respective countries to [illegible] make Ceylon their permanent home and give proof of their intentions, according to agreed tests, to be deemed Ceylonese; requiring all non-Ceylonese who seek to have started commercial, banking, agricultural, industrial or other enterprises to raise 50 per cent of their capital and appoint half their directorate from Ceylonese, and compelling the employment in all businesses of [illegible] per cent Ceylonese employees. Mr. J. R. [illegible]

Mr. C. Navaratnam moved an amendment [illegible] word "Indian" wherever it [illegible] seconded. Mr. K. Raja[illegible] twitted the Congress Executive [illegible] communal differences.

Mr. Pieter Keuneman had also given notice of an amendment on similar lines. He also moved that "complete prohibition of immigration" be altered to "controlling immigration into Ceylon in the national interests of the country;" and that the clause relating to the employment of 75 per cent Ceylonese be made applicable to businesses employing five or nine persons.

The mover and seconder accepted the amendments and the motion in the amended form was adopted.

Mr. K. Lewis Perera proposed and Mr. W. D. S. Gauthamadasa seconded a resolution seeking the introduction of a rationing scheme for textiles and asking for a reduction of the control price of textile goods.

Mrs. Sita Shanmugadasan, supporting, urged the women of Ceylon to join the men in the struggle for freedom.

Mr. B. K. Wimalanama and Mr. George R. de Silva supported the resolution.

Mr. J. Wirasekera proposed and Mr. P. Galoluwa seconded a resolution demanding a special committee of enquiry of the State Council to investigate and report on the whole question of the Agricultural Corps and its expenditure. Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa and Mr. Dudley Senanayake and a few others opposed the resolution, which was, however, carried by a majority.

G. "Daily News" Report on the Sessions[1]

Free Constitution for Ceylon Demanded
Congress Boycott Of Commission Affirmed
Reference To Russia Rouses Feeling

Feelings ran high at the 25th [*sic*] annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress, held at the Colombo Town Hall on Saturday, when a delegate, Mr. P. Givendrasinghe, while

1. *CDN*, 29 January 1945.

supporting a freedom resolution demanding recognition by the British of Lanka's right to independence and a free constitution, declared that this did not imply that Ceylon would be handed over to Soviet Russia. Loud protests and derisive epithets were hurled at Mr. Givendrasinghe from a section of the audience.

Mr. Geo. E. de Silva, President, sought to restore order by declaring that tolerance of the views expressed by delegates was desirable as a practical expression of the freedom which they demanded. He then called on other delegates to speak on the resolution.

Mr. Pieter Keuneman, General Secretary of the Ceylon Communist Party, responding to the President's invitation, deplored the "red herring" trailed by Mr. Givendrasinghe. It was quite clear, he said, that the Congress and the Communists were pledged to fight for the freedom of Ceylon despite the divergence of their political philosophies. The Communists advocated recourse to different methods for the acquisition of freedom, he declared, but it was no part of the Communist program to hand over Ceylon to Russia or any other country.

"Mischievous Statements"

Mr. Keuneman's speech was followed by other speakers who endorsed the sentiments expressed and deprecated the mischievous statements made by Mr. Givendrasinghe which, they declared, were calculated to cause a rift between the Congress and the Communists.

The audience continued to heckle Mr. Givendrasinghe who shouted back at them from the platform to learn better manners.

The President, however, succeeded in quelling the uproar by calling upon Mr. J. R. Jayewardene to move the next resolution.

The sessions were preceded by a procession with elephants and Kandyan dancers which started at the Tillekaratnaramaya, Borella junction, and went through Maradana Road, Dean's Road and Turret Road to the Town Hall, where the Congress flag was hoisted by Mr. Geo. E. de Silva.

Dr. A. Ratnapala, Chairman of the Reception Committee, welcomed the delegates to the sessions and traced the activities of the Congress since its inception.

Presidential Address

Mr. Geo. E. de Silva, Minister of Health and President-elect, then addressed the conference on the contribution Congress had made in the last 25 years in the fight for freedom. Despite the obstacles thrown in their way by reactionaries and self-seeking careerists, the people of the country had not only demanded their inherent right for freedom but had shown their capacity to use that freedom for the betterment of the national cause, he said. The 13 years of development under the Donoughmore Constitution—a constitution which experts predicted was unworkable and bound to collapse—was proof enough of their ability to govern themselves.

The Congress, which stood for freedom could not crawl before the Soulbury Commission whose terms of reference did not go beyond self-government. A rancorous voice was endeavouring to spread disaffection among the people of the country by propounding theories invented to give democracy, in the East, a new meaning and a new terminology. But Congressmen must strive unremittingly, until the freedom envisaged in the Pacific Charter proclaimed at Hot Springs, Virginia—to which Britain was a signatory—guaranteeing full freedom and equality to all people in the East, was made applicable to Ceylon. Congress sought this freedom for the promotion of the happiness of the people.

Exploitation Condemned

Mr. P. de S. Kularatne moved the first resolution con-
endeavouring to spread disaffection among the people of

subjugation and exploitation of one nation by another and urging the British Government to end the Indian deadlock and sending greetings to all peoples fighting for their freedom.

Mr. K. Rajaratnam seconded the resolution.

Mr. G. C. S. Corea, Minister of Labour, Industry and Commerce, proposed and Mr. P. Givendrasinghe seconded a resolution reiterating Lanka's right to independence and a free constitution.

Mr. Corea said that in reiterating this demand for freedom they should realise that there was more to it than passing the resolutions with solemn piety. They had to be ready to make sacrifices and prove to their rulers that they had reached that stage of political growth that would enable them to use that freedom wisely.

Mr. Givendrasinghe said that the freedom they wanted was for the Ceylonese, to have and to keep—not to be given away to Russia. It was at this stage that the uproar referred to earlier occurred.

Boycott of Soulbury Commission

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, proposing a resolution reaffirming the Congress decision to boycott the Soulbury Commission, said that the terms of the Commission envisaged the granting of a measure of reform that fell short of freedom and was, therefore, unacceptable. It was clear that the freedom they wanted could never be obtained by crawling before the Commission, even as some had done, but by relentless struggle to wrest that freedom for themselves. It was significant that those who had gone before the Commission were not representative of the masses in the country.

Mr. H. A. Koattegoda, Dr. S. A. Wickremasinghe and Mr. Sri Kantha supported the resolution.

A resolution, moved by Mr. Peter Perera and seconded by Mr. C. Jayewardene, that trade should be controlled by

the Government in the interests of the co-operative movement even after the war, provoked much criticism of the alleged obstruction caused to the growth of the co-operative movement by the Co-operative Department.

The resolutions were passed without dissent.

Support For "Free Lanka" Bill

A resolution "instructing" its members in the State Council to support the Bill providing "a new Constitution for a Free Lanka, as an advance in 'our struggle for freedom' and to incorporate in it a solution of the minority problem in accordance with the directions of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee," was passed after some discussion at yesterday's session of the Ceylon National Congress.

There was some opposition during the discussion to any "compromise," but Mr. Keuneman explained that this was not a compromise and that the Congress still stood for complete freedom.

The main issue was to reject the Reforms Declaration and concentrate their demands for the right to independence and a free constitution.

The mover of the motion (Mr. Gilbert Perera), Messrs. J. R. Jayewardene, M. G. Mendis, P. de S. Kularatne and the chairman, all explained that this (the motion) was only a direction to Congressmen in the State Council to support a Bill in advance of the Reforms Declaration.

The motion was passed by a small majority, about 230 delegates taking part in the voting.

Citizenship

Mr. Koattegoda moved and Mr. Jayewardene seconded that:

Whereas there is no law defining Ceylon citizenship and the status of other nationals in Ceylon, this session is of opinion that legislation should be introduced immediately: (a) controlling immigration into Ceylon; (b) defining Ceylon citizenship, and making it

possible for the nationals of other countries in Ceylon, who renounce their political and citizenship rights in their respective countries, to make Ceylon their permanent home.

The resolution was carried.

The motion was also passed asking for an immediate reduction in the control price of textile piece-goods, and the rationing of textiles.

After some discussion in which Messrs. J. Wirasekera, P. Galoluwa, J. N. Jinendradasa, Dudley Senanayake and others participated, the following motion was passed by a large majority:

> In view of the alarming reports of very unsatisfactory conditions prevailing in the Agricultural Corps and the vast expenditure of public funds in this connection with very little or no results, this Congress demands that a special committee of the State Council should forthwith be appointed to investigate and report on the whole question of the Agricultural Corps and its expenditure, so that the country may reap the benefit of this great project.

When the Congress "Declaration on Representation in a Free and United Lanka" was taken up, an amendment was proposed to postpone its discussion till nationalities were defined, but the amendment was defeated.

The Declaration, which was then taken up and passed, reiterated on among other things, that the Congress creed was freedom for Lanka, and recognised that a Free Lanka could only be built on the secure basis of independence from the foreign ruler, of equality of nationalities, and of common interest, goodwill and trust. The Congress further declared that in such a free, united and democratic Lanka: (a) The rights of nationalities regarding their language, culture, education, schools and freedom of religious worship will be

guaranteed by statute. Similarly, all privileges and discriminations based on caste, race and community will be abolished by statute and any infringement of the above will be made a penal office;

(b) Those Indians and the nationals of other countries in Ceylon who are prepared to adopt Ceylon as their permanent home, and give proof of such intentions, will be given full citizenship rights. Ceylon will, of course, have the right to control further immigration according to her own national interests.

Declaration of Rights

The following "Declaration of Fundamental Rights" was next moved by the chairman and accepted. [Resolution F was reproduced here].

H. Appendices to the Twenty-Sixth Annual Sessions

(1) Times of Ceylon Editorial, 30 January 1945: "Sinhalese and Tamil Congress Creeds"

The Sinhalese Congress, which held its 25th [*sic*] annual session on Saturday, chose its occasion well, because it is now possible to study the respective political programmes of the Sinhalese and the Tamil Congresses. Both want freedom, both ask for self-government, but what each means by freedom and self-government is far different. Mr. George E. de Silva, Minister of Health, and President of the Sinhalese Congress said: "We claim that our record of achievement during the past 13 years and specially during the five years of travail through which the world has passed and from which it has not yet emerged has earned for us freedom." The achievement of the Ministers during the past 13 years has by no means been an unqualified success. Even if it were otherwise, in what precise manner has Ceylon's record of achievement during "the five years of travail" entitled her to the kind of freedom envisaged by the Sinhales Congress? During the latter half of these five years the people of Ceylon have raked in more money

than they ever handled in their history of 2,000 years. This prosperity befell them because this island, by reason of its strategic position, has become a base for operations elsewhere. By great good fortune Ceylon has been spared the bitter experience of invasions. The enemy's solitary visits to Colombo and Trincomalee showed, however, this island's vulnerability. Her narrow escape in April, 1942, is not likely to be repeated—so long as she has at her disposal forces capable of resisting attack and invasion.

The presence of Allied forces in convincing numbers is the reason for Ceylon's later freedom from enemy aggression. The Sinhalese Congress President, therefore, chose an inopportune moment to demand among other things "an unfettered control over defence and foreign affairs." According to him this would be possible only if "the reactionary third party," namely the British, whose presence here with their Allies, has kept the Japanese off these shores, departed and left this island in the hands of Mr. de Silva and his friends. The hardheaded realists of the Tamil Congress see the folly of this wordy nonsense. They realize that, unlike India, which has put in the field an army of two millions, not to speak of her enormous resources of war potential, this island can never have "an unfettered control over foreign affairs and defence." Therefore, while desiring freedom, like all freeborn human beings, and while asking for self-government, the Tamil Congress also postulates the maintenance of the British connexion. This is the essential difference between the Tamil Congress and the Sinhalese Congress. The Tamils ask for freedom within the British Empire, the Sinhalese ask for freedom outside the British Empire. Nobody possessed of commonsense will be in doubt for a moment as to which of these two ideals is practicable. With British and allied forces present in huge numbers to ensure her freedom, only those bereft of all sense of proportion can talk of "unfettered control over defence and foreign affairs." But this is the language—with more to the same effect—with which Mr. de Silva tried to inflame the capering crowd which led him with elephants for declamation in the Town Hall.

Not being altogether unintelligent, the Capitalist-Communist apostles of this new doctrine know perfectly well whither this is tending. They are however indifferent to the results because they know what they want. The way is being sedulously prepared for a form of government which is not democracy. Under democracy power is shared and shared alike by all. Our Capitalist-Communists want no such thing. They want to dominate. They want to be dictators. The world knows only of two systems, violently opposed to each other, which were at one in placing power in the hands of a dominant faction : Fascism and Communism. Fascism is anathema to all democrats. Today the world is being made safe against Fascism and a good thing too. Therefore those who are greedy for power have only its alternative left, namely, Communism. Moreover communism enjoys this advantage over its discredited rival. It is easily recommended under the guise of democracy. This is the stalking-horse behind which the Capitalist-Communists are advancing to power. They don't believe in communism. If they did, they would renounce their wealth, and practice what they preach. But they cling to the resources of capitalism and the doctrines of communism, because by a clever manipulation of both, they hope to attain power. This is the urge that has made the local capitalists turn communist. They know that only by lip-service to communism can they fasten their hold on the masses and rise on their shoulders to the Ceylon brand of Dictatorship of the Proletariat.

42. TWENTY SEVENTH ANNUAL SESSIONS, 11-12 JANUARY 1946

A. Minutes of the Sessions

A summary of the proceedings of the [twenty seventh] annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held on 11th, 12th and 13th January 1946 at Rahula College Hall, Matara.

Presidential Procession: On Friday the 11th, the presidential procession with over 5,000 people conducting the president-elect, Mr. George E. de Silva, Hon Minister of Health, commenced its journey towards Rahula College Hall at 3.30 p m. This magnificent procession which was embellished by dance formations depicting rural games and historical events, by the playing of tom toms, drums, horns and pipes and with elephants, etc. was organised by the Matara Congress Association. Mr. George E. de Silva and Mr. A. F. Wijemanne (advocate), Chairman of the Reception Committee, were greeted with garlands at several places along the way. The procession arrived at the Rahula College Hall at 5 30 p.m. and was conducted to the beautifully decorated rostrum which stood in the centre of the College grounds. The President hoisted the Congress flag while the gathering sang the national song to background music supplied by Mr. Rupasinghe. Thereafter the gathering entered the Hall. Mr. A. F. Wijemanne, the Chairman of the Reception Committee, then delivered an address welcoming the delegates. Thereafter the President took the chair and presented his address. The printed speeches of the Chairman and the President were distributed among the gathering.

The next item in the programme was the conference of the office bearers of National Congress associations which was begun at 9 p.m. and continued till late hours.

On the next day the business sessions commenced at 9 a.m., and the resolutions scheduled for discussion were tabled.

The following resolution on the agenda was moved by Mr. C. Navaratnam:

> The Ceylon National Congress condemns the Declaration of the Secretary of State for the Colonies[1] on the Soulbury Constitution as it does not concede to us the right to freedom, but it authorises Congress Members in the State Council to vote for the Leader's motion, because the implementation of a Constitution based on the said Declaration[2] will give us a more effective instrument to carry on our struggle for freedom.

Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa seconded. Speaking on the subject, Mr. Jayantha Wirasekera moved that the resolution should read as follows:

> The 26th [*sic*] Annual Sessions also adopts the resolution passed by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee on the 24th November 1945, which noted: "The Ceylon National Congress condemns the Declaration of the Secretary of State for the Colonies on the Soulbury Constitution as it does not concede to us the right to freedom, but it authorises Congress members in the State Council to vote for the Leader's motion, because the implementation of a Constitution based on the said Declaration will give us a more effective instrument to carry on our struggle for Freedom."

Mr. P. Galoluwa seconded. The aforementioned resolution was passed.

Mr. Gilbert Perera moved:

> This Sessions authorises the Working Committee to prepare a manifesto outlining the Congress views on a future economic and social programme for Lanka.

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1. In the English version of the agenda (printed) the phrase "the Declaration of His Majesty's Government" was used.

2. In the English version the phrase "based on the White Paper 31.10.45" was employed.

Mr. Peter Perera seconded. The resolution was adopted.

Language: Mr. Jayantha Wirasekera moved:

> This Congress gives its fullest support to the attempts to make the national languages the official languages of Lanka in the shortest possible time.

Mr. C. D. Jayawardena seconded. Messrs J. N. Jinendradasa, E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, V. Subasinghe, D. A. P. Kahawita, S. P. A. de Silva, G. D. Gunatilaka, and J. R. Jayewardene spoke on the motion. The resolution was adopted.

Congress Rules: Mr. J. R. Jayewardene moved the *following motions*:

> This Sessions approves the following alterations to the Constitution of the Congress: (a) Article 5 (9) to be amended to Re. 1 per year instead of Rs. 4; (b) Article 12 to be amended to make the Working Committee the Nomination Board.

Mr. H. A. Koattegoda seconded. Messrs V. Subasinghe, D. D. Jayasinghe, Montague Jayawickrema, E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, Gilbert Perera, Jayantha Wirasekera and J. R. Jayewardene presented their views on the motion, which was subsequently carried.

Local Bodies: The resolution moved by Mr. H. A. Koattegoda and seconded by Mr. J. E. Amaratunga was adopted.

> This Sessions is of opinion that the financial aid given by the central government to local bodies is totally inadequate and that for the proper provision of the amenities of modern civilisation to small towns and rural areas, such as water, sanitation and lights, the Central Government should, after making a comprehensive survey of what is necessary, provide the finance to enable local bodies to provide those amenities.

Co-operative Movement: Mr. V. Subasinghe moved the following motion:

> This Sessions is of opinion that Government should give all encouragement to the co-operative movement though hostilities have ceased.

of the culture and art of the Sinhalese, an avenue of work which has been sadly neglected, but as far as politics are concerned, to be a member of the Sinhala Maha Sabha should be abhorrent to those who speak of a United Lanka or even a Free Lanka; for unity is our surest guarantee to freedom.

As surely as communalism grew up under the protective shade, nay, even encouragement of foreign rule, the indiscipline that we see around us, strikes among school boys, ill-organized attempts by workers without leaders to force the hands of their employers and even of the Government, the scurrilous attacks on public men and the lack of loyalty to political leaders, are but the heritage of any subject race. We have a golden opportunity during the next few years to build up our race again; to pick up the threads of her national life, scattered far and wide, and to weave them again into a truly Eastern pattern, worthy of our great past and suited to the needs of the future. There are, however, in our midst, men of learning and ability, who professing to follow the teachings of Marx, by word and deed, are sowing the seeds of class hatred in order to disrupt the organisation of the State. Their goal they say is the Socialist State. The one path they all tread originally, has now become trifurcated, and now they march along the narrow paths they have cut out, carrying foreign banners and shouting unfamiliar slogans, but above all, hurling insults at each other. It is a pity that these men have so cut themselves away from the main artery of our national life, and are dissipating their undoubted ability and energy in leading their own little bands of men and women, when they can be leaders of the nation. Why do they do what they are doing? Is their goal different from ours? These questions bring me to the problem of our future social and economic structure.

The Congress as well as other political organisations have during the last 25 years concentrated largely on the purely political aspect of freedom. Subjection to foreign rule was galling to our national pride, and therefore freedom from

such subjection was in itself a self-sufficient goal. We have however, learned in the light of the developments that have taken place in the world during the last 10 years, and through our experience of the working of the Donoughmore Constitution, that the context of political freedom must be both social and economic. Freedom means little, unless the order of things which the foreign ruler planted here, and now protects, is done away with, and the structure of society is reconstructed to remove the cause of poverty and raise the the standard of living of the masses. The fringe of the subject of poverty was touched by us when in 1939 the policy and programme of the Congress was drafted. We said then, 'After 125 years of British Rule the people of this country are reduced to a condition of destitution and financial distress...............it is imperative that the country should have full control of its government in order to achieve its economic independence and to ensure higher and nobler standards of living for its people." Many of the remedies we then suggested are today on the statute book. I may mention, (a) the State control and distribution of agricultural produce; (b) the compulsory acquisition of private lands on payment of compensation; (c) importation of essential commodities to be taken over by the State; (d) establishment of a State Bank; (e) Education Commission to draft a scheme of national education; (f) mother tongue to be the medium of instruction; (g) national languages to be the official languages; (h) establishment of rural hospitals and other medical facilities to be provided free; (i) a medical research bureau and a few others. Much more remains to be done. We propose to ask the Working Committee to draft a new manifesto setting out clearly the Congress views on the social and economic structure of a Free Lanka. I am confident that that manifesto will make self-sufficiency the keynote of its programme. Lanka must produce it own food, and that too, sufficient to provide every citizen with a nutritious diet. Basic industries must be nationalised; cottage and small scale industries should be encouraged, and together with co-operative farming should provide a means for the rejuvenation of village life,

I repeat again that the most vital and urgent problem is how to remove the cause of poverty and raise the standard of the masses. The primary object of all planning must be the well-being of the masses. If it is necessary to nationalise a particular industry or to acquire lands for large scale cultivation, or to open State or collective farms, with a view to achieving this end, we should do so without fear or favour, or without letting our prejudices about socialism affect our actions. Slogans must not be allowed to rule our lives, though they may well guide our actions. What we achieved during the 6 years of war should be our example. Did we not nationalise the entire importation of essential commodities? Did we not almost eliminate the private trader and serve the people through consumer-co-operatives? Did the State not plan how much a citizen should eat and determine from where he should get it? It was this planned and impartial policy, treating rich and poor, great and small, alike that saved us from the fate that Bengal suffered. If we could do so in war time, even more is it necessary in times of peace. I therefore look forward with confidence to the programme and policy which will be drafted by the Congress as providing a panacea for many of our ills.

But however progressive our internal economic policy may be, we cannot achieve much unless our goods are permitted free access to the markets of the world and producers in other countries are permitted to trade with us without hindrance. To-day entire tea, rubber and coconut products are bought by the British Government at prices fixed by them, and we have to buy our goods through their Crown Agents again at prices fixed by them. We ask no favours. We only ask that Lanka be permitted to sell her produce to the highest buyer and to buy the goods she needs at the lowest price. Trade and commerce will figure prominently in the post-war world, and we are fortunate that the new constitution will give us power we did not hitherto possess not only with regard to these two subjects, but also with regard to coastal shipping.

With our advance to freedom the more we free ourselves from the apron strings of the Colonial Office, we must enter into terms of friendship as an equal with other free nations. With this object in view, other Congressmen and I have sought representation for Lanka as a free nation in the Peace Conference and the other Councils of the Nations. With the same object I have sent our greetings to the Indian leaders and to the new Indonesian Republic, for the freedom of subject peoples is one and indivisible. Lanka intends not only to be free, it intends to hold an honoured place among the free nations of the world and to teach them by the example of her ancient culture based on the incomparable teachings of the Buddha. The shadow of that great teaching which came to us from India taught our fore-fathers tolerance and democratic ideas. Never in our long history did we pursue imperialistic ventures or exploit others, and our governmental tradition was always democratic. It is not surprising, therefore, that untrained in the use of British parliamentary institutions, in spite of the defects of the Donoughmore Constitution, we showed in the way we worked this Constitution, that we had not forgotten the art of self-government which we enjoyed for over 2,300 years.

My friends, I have already taken too much of your time. It is not by speeches and fine words that we still attain our goal. Time and circumstances are far more powerful that speeches. The historical period we live in, the circumstances in which the nations of the world are placed in as a result of World War No. 2, will determine our course of action, whatever ideals we may secretly nurture. Lanka is a small country ; it is inhabited by only 6,500,000 people, and of these, the Sinhalese who number only 4,000,000, do not find a place anywhere else in the world. We must proceed with care and caution, in an age where might is right, to protect our inheritance and our people, so that for generations to come happiness may be the lot of the citizens of our common mother land.

D. Extract from Ceylon Daily News Report on the First Day's Proceedings[1]

Congress Out to Create Unity and Discipline
Colourful Opening at Matara

The [27th] annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress opened at Sri Lanka Rahula Vidyalaya Hall, Matara, last evening with Mr. George E. de Silva, President, in the chair.

The delegates travelling from Colombo had special arrangements made for them by the railway, and the Reception Committee was responsible for the arrangements to transport the delegates from Matara station and their stay.

The President and delegates were received by the Chairman of the Reception Committee, Mr. A. F. Wijemanne.

Colourful Procession

A colourful congressional procession over half a mile long, complete with elephants, dancers, drummers and musicians, started at the entrance to the U. C. limits, Matara, and proceeded over a route of two miles, thronged by spectators. A feature of the procession was the numerous pauses on the route, to enable the President to receive welcomes from several bodies representing the minority communities, such as the Muslims of Matara.

Among those who accorded welcomes were the Parakrama Industrial Works, the Sri Lanka Works and the Ayurvedic Sangam. On behalf of the Muslim community, Mr. A. M. Buhar, welcomed the President, whom Shafi Alim Sabhib (Chief Muslim dignitary) garlanded.

Civil Reception

The procession proceeded to the U. C. Office grounds, where a civic welcome was accorded.

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1. *CDN*, 12 January 1946.

Mr. E. M. W. Jayasuriya (Chairman U. C.), garlanding the President, in a brief speech wished that the stay of the President and the delegates at Matara would be pleasant.

The President in reply said that it gave him great pleasure to see that the members of the Council performed their duties as citizens so admirably, and he hoped that their activities would enable them to realise their dream of freedom for the country within a very short time.

[Hereafter follows a presentation of extracts from Mr. George E. de Silva's presidential address] [1]

E. EXTRACT FROM THE TIMES OF CEYLON REPORT ON THE FIRST DAY'S PROCEEDINGS [2]

New Ceylon on Truly Eastern Pattern

Congress Ideal

The [27th] sessions of the Ceylon National began yesterday with the hoisting of the Congress flag by Mr. George E. de Silva at the Rahula Vidyalaya grounds, in the presence of a large gathering of delegates from all parts of the Island. Mr. de Silva was welcomed and garlanded at Pamburan by Mr. A. F. Wijemanne, Chairman of the Reception Committee, and conducted to the venue in a procession headed by six elephants. Many dancers and acrobats participated in the procession. Enroute Mr. de Silva was garlanded and received by various associations of Matara.

The sessions opened with the speech by the Chairman of the Reception Committee, Mr. A. F. Wijemanne. Among those accommodated on the platform were Mrs. George E. de Silva and Messrs J. R. Jayewardene, H. A. Koattegoda, P. de S. Jayasekera, Dudley Senanayake, David Wanigasekera, R. C. Kannangara, Gilbert Perera, U. M. Perera,

1. See *supra*, pp. 1609-15.
2. *Times of Ceylon*, 12 January 1946.

E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, C. D. Jayawardena, T. F. Jayawardene, Montague Jayawickrema, Wilfred Gunesekera and Kudoos Marikkar.

F. Ceylon Daily News Report on the Second Day's Proceedings[1]

Use of National Languages in the State Council
Legislation to be Introduced

The Select Committee of the State Council inquiring into the proposal to make the national languages the official languages. It has invited heads of departments next week to examine the possibility of conducting the work of their departments in the national languages.

This was announced at the business sessions of the Ceylon National Congress today by Mr. J. R. Jayewardene in the course of the discussion on a motion pledging the support of Congress to the attempts to make the national languages the official languages in the shortest possible time.

Mr. J. Wirasekera moved that the Congress gives its fullest support to the attempts to make the national languages the official languages of Lanka in the shortest possible time.

Mr. C. D. Jayawardena, seconding, referred to the work of the Select Committee of the State Council going into the question, and hoped that the proposals would be implemented this year.

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, who is chairman of the Select Committee, said that in response to its invitations the Comittee had received about 250 communications from the public, which were being examined by Mr. Lanerolle, who would place them before the Committee. The Committe is to discuss matters with heads of departments next week,

1. *CDN*, 14 January 1946.

and it was also proposed that one or two members of the Committee should go to Travancore, Mysore and other parts of India where the national languages were used in state business and make a re-report to the Committee. He said that at the next sessions of the State Council legislation would be introduced to enable Council business to be conducted in Sinhalese and Tamil, and he thought that before the next annual sessions of the Congress, their President would perhaps have delivered the first speech in Sinhalese in the Council.

Sinhalese Inscriptions for Hospitals

In spite of the Board of Ministers, Mr. Jayewardene said that he still found that even in places where not a soul could read English, the Government continued to put up boards with "central school," "rural centre," "cottage hospital" in English. If the Minister of Health could not find men who could inscribe such notices in Sinhalese, he would be glad to present the Minister with 240 stone slabs with Sinhalese inscriptions for his cottage hospitals, Mr. Jayewardene said. The President (Mr. Geo. E. de Silva) : "I accept the offer gladly" (Laughter).

Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa denied that Sinhalese was inadequate for modern needs and said that he had himself for three years taught such subjects as physics, chemistry, etc. in Sinhalese. It was quite possible, he said, to use Sinhalese right up to the University stage.

Mr. E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, referred to how de Valera had introduced Gaelic in state business in Eire, and, referring to a criticism of members of the legal profession, who had opposed the use of the national languages in courts, said there was no reason why interpreters should not be eliminated and the examination of witnesses done in the national languages. But the examination of witnesses was not the only thing, and so far as the translation of legal texts was concerned, it would certainly take some time.

Fifty-Fifty Dead in Jaffna

Mr. C. Navaratnam, a member, of the Working Committee, moved a resolution stating that the sessions endorse the decision of the Congress Committee to the effect that the Congress condemns the Declaration of His Majesty's Government, as it does not concede to us the right to freedom, but it authorised the Congress members in the State Council to vote for the Leader's motion because the implementation of a constitution based on the White Paper, will give us a more effective instrument to carry on our struggle for freedom.

Mr. Navaratnam said that "fifty-fifty" was dead in Jaffna. Immediately after the State Council decision he and his friends went to Jaffna to find out the reaction there. He found the prevailing opinion in Jaffna in favour of acceptance, despite the action of the Tamil Congress expelling three of its members in the State Council. The people of Jaffna said that Ceylon owed a great debt to Mr. D. S. Senanayake for piloting the measures through the Council. He could assure them that Fifty-Fifty was dead in Jaffna now and they were instead preparing to work the new constitution successfully. The Tamils, he believed, could make their own contribution to the welfare of the country by joining the National Congress.

Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa seconded the motion.

Mr. Dudley Senanayake said that the Congress had been blamed by some parties for its acceptance of the White Paper, alleging that it impeded the struggle for freedom. He thought that if they held that view such persons should set the Congress a noble example by boycotting the new constitution. But he understood they were already preparing to fight the next election. Perhaps they meant to make use of the new constitution to further their ends.

The resolution was unanimously carried.

The appointment of a Commission of Inquiry into the whole subject was urged by Mr. H. A. Koattegoda who moved a resolution that the assembly was of opinion that the financial aid given by Government to local bodies was totally inadequate and that Government should, after a comprehensive survey of what was necessary, provide finance to enable local bodies to provide the amenities of modern civilisation to small towns and rural areas, viz., water, sanitation, lights, etc. The resolution was carried.

Sinhalese Girl as Guerilla

Mr. D. Gangoda next moved a resolution sending the sessions' greeting to the men of the Indian National Army whose acts were motivated by a desire to free India and strongly protesting against the trial of these patriots. Mr. Gangoda said it was clear that these men were no puppets of the Japanese, but fought to release the country from foreign bondage.

Mr. M. R. T. Buhar, seconding, said that a matter for elation was that these valiant men under Subhas Chandra Bose were prepared to sacrifice their lives.

Mr. P. D. S. Jayasekera said that he was sure that they would feel proud when he told them that he had heard in India that some Sinhalese in Malaya had joint the I. N. A. and a Sinhalese girl was in the ranks of the women's guerilla forces.

The following Working Committee was appointed by the President for this year: Messrs. Geo. E. de Silva, J. R. Jayewardene, H. A. Koattegoda, P. D. S. Jayasekera, Dudley Senanayake, Gilbert Perera, R. C. Kannangara, Dr. A. Ratnapala, Messrs. C. Navaratnam, David Wanigasekera, Montague Jayawickrema, J. N. Jinendradasa, E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, G. C. S. Corea, P. de S. Kularatne, and A. F. Wijemanne.

G. Times of Ceylon Report on the Second Day's Proceedings[1]

Congress Move for Freedom
Setting up of National Fund

About 300 delegates were present last Saturday morning at the resumed [27th] sessions of the Ceylon National Congress with Mr. George E. de Silva, President, in the chair.

The annual report stated that the Congress Working Committee and the All-Ceylon Congress Committee had approved the creation of a National Freedom Fund, the objects of which were the securing of freedom for the Ceylonese, the holding of a propaganda campaign in this connexion not only in Ceylon but in England and other parts of the world too, and the building of a National Hall. The report added that during the year under review twenty-one branch associations had been registered.

Mr. C. Navaratnam moved that the session should endorse the decision arrived at the All-Ceylon Congress Committee held in November 1945, condemning the Declaration of His Majesty's Government as it did not concede them their right to freedom but authorizing Congress members in State Council to vote for the Leader's motion because the implementation of a constitution based on the White Paper of 31.10.45 would give them a more effective instrument to carry on their struggle for freedom.

The voting on the White Paper, Mr. Navaratnam said, had done at least one good thing to Ceylon in that it had brought all communities together in closer tie. Immediately after the acceptance of the White Paper, when he went to Jaffna, he found that according to public opinion there they had done the correct thing despite the action of the All-Ceylon Tamil Congress in expelling two of its members. That was what he found when he went to the North to form a progressive Tamil bloc.

1. *Times of Ceylon*, 15 January 1946.

The general feeling there was that Mr. Senanayake had done a great deal in shaping the destiny of this country. Further they had a clear conviction that Ceylon was now on the threshold of freedom which she would attain even before India. The fifty-fifty cry was now definitely dead in Jaffna, he assured them, and they were now formulating a scheme to carry on the new constitution.

Mr. J. N. Jinendradasa seconded and the motion was duly carried.

Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, in explaining why the Congress voted for the White Paper, said that the new constitution was a very close second to dominion status. No doubt the English King had certain powers to thrust on us his own rules and withhold any rules the Ministers might frame. But the King would not exercise these powers without consulting the Ministers in the new constitution. At present even under the existing constitution this happened at times because we were governed by a British Cabinet.

Continuing, he said that none could stop the country's march towards freedom. The new constitution was a further step forward.

Mr. Jayewardene said that whatever the Communists might say as to why they resigned from the Congress the true fact was that the President of the Congress, on the authority given by the Working Committee, asked them to resign as they opposed the decision of the Working Committee and was [sic] carrying on some propaganda against the Congress. If they had not resigned the President would have expelled them.

Mr. Dudley Senanayake said that the critics, if they were really opposed to the White Paper, should reject it as a whole. They would boycott the new constitution. But instead of doing this some of them were even now preparing to seek election.

Messrs. C. L. E. Perera, Gilbert Perera, E. A. P. Wijeyeratne, D. Subasinghe, J. N. Jinendradasa, D. Gangoda, M. R. T. Akbar, H. A. Koattegoda and P. D. S. Jayasekera also spoke.

The sessions recorded a vote of condolence on the death of Col. T. G. Jayewardene.

H. Appendices to the Twenty-Seventh Annual Sessions

(1) Times of Ceylon Editorial, 14 January, 1946: "A National Party"

The tentative suggestions made for the formation of political parties have not yet materialized. This is not surprising because no political or economic principle has so far emerged making it possible for parties to form for its furtherence. Nothing positive in this direction has accrued, but a negative principle has always been evident. The President of the Ceylon National Congress, Mr. George E. de Silva, gave expression to this principle at the twenty-sixth [*sic*] annual sessions on Friday. He said : "Let us of all races, while preserving our racial characteristics, our individual culture and language, as Sinhalese, Tamils, Moors, and even smaller communities, be members of one nation, citizens of Lanka. It therefore, behoves us, the Sinhalese, to set the example by dissolving our communal organizations. The Sinhalese cannot criticize the Tamil Congress and at the same time cling with a clear conscience to the Sinhala Maha Sabha." These words have the true statesmanlike ring. Had the leaders of the country in the past been equally outspoken in condemnation of disruptive tendencies, not only might much bitterness and misunderstanding have been averted but this country's political progress would have been hastened. It is useless at this stage to repine at the past. The future must now engage attention and it is not without hope.

One of the first pronouncements of the Rt. Rev. Lakdasa de Mel on his appointment as Assistant Bishop was to call for the disbandment of communal clubs. This was a lead

in the right direction, although it has to be admitted that communal clubs, far from fostering communal prejudices, have made for inter-communal understanding. Political organizations formed on a communal basis have always been a fruitful cause of mischief. As a good Sinhalese, Mr. de Silva has frankly recognized the harm done by the Sinhala Maha Sabha. Among the communities in this island the Sinhalese are the one who stand least in danger of being swamped. But the Sinhala Maha Sabha was founded on the theory that their national existence was in jeopardy. Extravagant language had to be used to bolster up this specious plea. The campaign was kept up by means which progressively damaged inter-communal harmony. The foundation of the Tamil Congress was a direct result of the foundation of the Sinhala Maha Sabha. Mr. de Silva was perfectly logical when he said that the Sinhalese could not criticize the Tamil Congress and at the same time cling to the Sinhala Maha Sabha. "So far as politics are concerned," roundly declared this Sinhalese Minister, "to be a member of the Sinhala Maha Sabha should be abhorrent to those who speak of a United Lanka or even a Free Lanka, for unity is our surest guarantee to freedom."

Whether he was aware of it or not, Mr. de Silva in these words indicated a national policy which should appeal to all right-thinking persons. Thoughtful men are wondering how and for what purpose they can form political parties. Here surely is the best programme for such a party. All the political ills of this island have been due to communal dissensions, jealousies and suspicions. A political party, which, instead of emphasising these causes of disruption, rises grandly above them is assured of the support of all honest patriots. When the Ceylon National Congress was founded, it strove to rise above the differences of community, caste and creed. How it fell from its faith is well known to Mr. de Silva. Today the Congress is yet another communal caucus. It differs from the Sinhala Maha Sabha only in this respect that while the Sabha is frankly and unashamedly communal, the Congress is national in a Pecksniffian sense. The one is no more national than the

other. What Ceylon needs, if she is to go forward to her national destiny, is a party which would embrace persons of all communities, castes and creeds, on a basis of perfect equality. If such a national party cannot be formed at once, the way for it may be prepared by dissolving the communal parties.

(2) Times of Ceylon Editorial, 16 January 1946: "Nationalistic and Socialistic"

Already we have canvassed the possibility of the next State Council, or House of Representatives, being even more nationalistic and socialistic than the present one. Perhaps it would be better to await the manifesto of the Ceylon National Congress which is being asked to set out the Congress views on the social and economic structure of a free Lanka, but there certainly were indications in the Congress President's speech of the trends mentioned. What Mr. George E. de Silva has said may or may not be prophetic, but very similar views have been expressed in the State Council and not only by members who are regraded as tending to be extreme and rabid. While the Congress President criticised certain would-be political leaders for stirring up strife and sowing the seeds of class hatred, he asked them whether the goal they professed to set for themselves—the Socialist State—was any more different from the Congress goal. We agree that the leaders referred to were irresponsible to a degree when they fomented strikes which threatened to cut off the inflow of goods to Ceylon at a time when the priority and greatest need for the country as a whole and for every individual was to step up the supply of goods, particularly food-stuffs and those needed for urgent replacements and productive development. All the same, though it may be very well to talk about infusing discipline into democracy, is this to mean that the weapon of the strike is to be wrested from the hands of the workers in all or any circumstances? We doubt whether such a form of discipline would accord with the principles of democracy as practised in certain countries today.

We are, however, more interested in the Congress intentions as to the future social and economic structure as indicated through the medium of their President. We agree of course, that the aim of the Government, and of any Government indeed, should be to remove the causes of poverty and to raise the standard of living of the masses, but we do not accept that everything that is unsatisfactory in the state of Ceylon should be attributed to the terrible iniquities planted here by foreign rule and to the exploitation conducted by foreign rule. It cannot be denied that prosperity has grown and the population has increased, progressively and practically without a break, during the whole period of foreign rule in Ceylon and we must dismiss these recriminations against foreign rule as so much playing to the political gallery. We are more interested in the shape of things to come as outlined by the Congress President. In the present state of things self-sufficiency is certainly an excellent aspiration for Ceylon. It is certainly unthinkable that an agricultural country should fall so short of producing its own supplies as is Ceylon's unhappy record. The aim of self-sufficiency in food supplies, not merely rice and other agricultural produce but also fish, should certainly be vigorously pursued until it is achieved. Complete self-sufficiency, however, is a different matter, and we doubt whether it is a wise policy, since other countries might retaliate by doing without Ceylon's exports, such as tea, rubber and coconut produce, and Ceylon would be the poorer by being deprived of the wherewithal to pay for imports of commodities which she will never conceivably be able to produce.

Next on the Congress programme is apparently to be the nationalisation of basic industries, the encouragement of cottage and small-scale industries, together with co-operative farming, in order to provide means for the rejuvenation of village life. It would be interesting to have a definition of what is a basic industry. Is tea, which in the past has accounted for between 60 and 70 per cent of the income from Ceylon's export of merchandise, to be regarded

as a basic industry and is it to be nationalised ? It is certainly basic in the sense that it is the main base for Ceylon's prosperity, but we fancy Mr. de Silva has some other meaning in mind. Even if that is so, it is not to be assumed that estates are to regard themselves as safe from the acquisitive ideas of the future government. "If it is necessary to nationalise a particular industry, or to acquire lands for large scale cultivation or to open state or collective farms, we should do so without fear or favour or without letting our prejudices about socialism affect our actions." In other words, we should carry out extremely socialistic policies without any bias for or against socialism. As to free access to other markets for the sale of Ceylon produce, or the purchase of commodities, we will content ourselves by saying that Ceylon in a few years' time will be extremely glad to have the British Empire for trade contacts, and particularly as importing markets for her produce. If other parts of the Empire, and particularly the United Kingdom, set themselves against buying Ceylon produce the result would be disastrous for Ceylon. No amount of Congress altruism or socialistic planning would affect the result. Ah, well, we suppose we must await in patience the emergence of the Congress manifesto that is intended to be the plan for the social and economic future of Sri Lanka.

43. TWENTY EIGHTH ANNUAL SESSIONS, 18 JANUARY 1947

A. Circular Note and Agenda [1]

Congress Office,
Borella Flats,
Borella, Colombo,
December 30th, 1946.

Dear Friend,

The 27th [sic] annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress will be held at the "Palm Court," Albert Crescent, (opposite the Colombo Museum) on Saturday the 18th January, 1947 commencing at 10 a.m.

While cordially inviting you to this important occasion we kindly request you to bring this letter with you for admission.

Lunch will be served to the delegates.

Yours truly,
J. R. Jayewardene,
Jayanta Wirasekera,
Jt. Hony. Secretaries, C. N. C.

1. The Working Committee to move:

   This sessions reiterates the demand for freedom for the people of Lanka and urges all candidates for election to the new Parliament to pledge themselves to work for the attainment of this goal.

2. Mr. Gilbert Perera to move:

   In view of the decision of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee meeting held on the 26th May, it is incumbent upon the Congress to launch upon a rural upliftment programme immediately, by taking up work in at least six villages in different parts of the island.

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1. C. N. A., 60/37; a single-sheet leaflet with a Sinhalese on the other side.

3. The Working Committee to move:

The Congress will not nominate candidates for the next elections, but will co-operate with the U. N. P. to put forward candidates from a common platform and on a common policy and authorises such members of the Congress who wish to do so to become members of the U.N.P.

4. This Congress is of opinion that the report of the Committee on Sinhalese and Tamil as the official languages should be implemented.

B. MINUTES OF THE SESSIONS

The minutes of the [twenty-eigth] annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held on the 18th January 1947 at "Palm Court" (opposite the Colombo Museum).

The President-elect, Mr. George E. de Silva, Hon. Minister of Health, took the chair and the proceedings commenced at 10 a.m. Mr. Jayantha Wirasekera, the Hon. Jt. Secretary-elect, read the programme for the day. The President-elect then delivered his address.

Motions: Mr. J. R. Jayewardene moved that:

The Working Committee should be given the authority to draw money in order to meet the needs of the National Congress from the fund collected by Congress and known as the National Freedom Fund.

Mr. Gilbert Perera moved an amendment that "It may be more suitable if the said amount be limited to Rs. 1000." After a brief discussion the original motion was passed.

Mr. Jayantha Wirasekera moved the 1st resolution in the agenda, seconded by Mr. U. M. Perera. Mr. Gilbert Perera spoke against it. Thereafter Mr. P. Galoluwa moved that "The motion should be returned." Mr. Manoratne seconded. A vote was taken and the original motion was carried with 27 voting in favour and 16 voting against.

Mr. Gilbert Perera made a brief speech on the 2nd resolution in the agenda and announced that he wished to withdraw the motion.

The President, Mr. George E. de Silva, moved the 3rd resolution, seconded by Mr. J. R. Jayewardene Messrs. Jayantha Wirasekera, S. J. de Silva, Gilbert Perera, Donald Gangoda, P. P. Siriwardena expressed views against the resolution while Mr. D. A. P. Kahawita spoke in favour of it. Mr. P. Galoluwa then proposed that the motion be postponed. During the heated argument that followed, some members of the Maradana Congress Association left the conference hall. A vote was taken on the 3rd resolution and it was adopted with 47 members voting in favour and 11 members voting against.

At this stage, advocate H. A. Koattegoda requested Mr. Gilbert Perera to move the 2nd resolution as he considered it to be a very important proposal. Mr. Gilbert Perera then proposed the 2nd resolution which was seconded by Mr. George E. de Silva. Messrs. D. A. P. Kahawita, C. L. E. Perera, Sadris Silva, spoke in favour of it. Mr. Gilbert Perera then promised that he would donate Rs. 1000 annually to the programme and that he would inform the Working Committee once the programme had been formulated.

Mr. Jayantha Wirasekera moved the 4th resolution, seconded by Bujjampola Wagiswara.[1]

Finally Mr. P. D. S. Jayasekera moved the following resolution :

> The Ceylon National Congress extends its moral support to the people of the Vietnam Republic who are fighting against Imperialist France and requests the people of Ceylon and the Government of Ceylon not to give any kind of support to the French Imperialist Armed forces.

Mr. Donals Gangoda seconded.

1. The fate of this resolution is not mentioned in the minutes.

The proceedings were concluded and the delegates were served with lunch.

J. R. Jayewardene,
Jayantha Wirasekera,
President. Hony Joint Secretaries.

C. George E. de Silva's Presidential Address[1]

My friends,

You have again honoured me by electing me your President for the third year in succession and for the fourth time. Many of the problems that faced us during the early years are now solved ; new problems, however, arise in this ever-changing world and call urgently for an answer. Let me, however, pause for a moment and dwell on the question of freedom, to obtain which this Congress was founded and exists to this day.

The new constitution based mainly on the recommendations of the Soulbury Commissioners was accepted by the State Council and the Congress and now appears in statute form. Elections under this constitution, I trust, will be held as early as possible, for the country is sick and tired of the Donoughmore constitution. I need not now dwell on the controversies which raged round the acceptance or rejection of this constitution, for those who were most vociferous in condemning it were the first to announce their intention to contests seats for the new Parliament. If this is a sign that these so-called revolutionaries have become parliamentarians the omens are good for future progress. However that may be, both the British Government as well as the dominions and some foreign countries such as America realise that very soon the few fetters in the new constitution that bar our path to complete freedom will be removed and a Free Lanka will once again hold her head high among the free nations of the world.

Our freedom was delayed for one main reason, lack of communal unity. The Congress from the very outset sought to achieve this unity and during the first two years of its

1. Available in typescript form (in English) as well as in manuscript, in handwriting which is probably George E. de Silva's. See C. N. A. ,60/113.

existence actually achieved it. Under the leadership of Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, the Sinhalese, Tamils, Moors, Malays and Burghers joined hands to free Ceylon from foreign rule. Unfortunately misunderstandings arose and this new-born unity disappeared. Communal organizations sprang up and the Congress, though its doors were open to all, became in its membership largely a Sinhalese body. For a quarter of a century through the life of the 1st and 2nd Legislative Council, in spite of the abolition of communal representation in the Donoughmore Constitution throughout the life of the 1st State Council and of the 2nd Council until 1946, the canker of communalism ate into the vitals of the body politic. The supreme manifestation of this ideology was seen in the birth of the Tamil Congress, which put forward the creed of 50/50. We have passed through those phases now. The ship of state which began its voyage to the port of freedom with courage and unity almost foundered in the communal storms that it encountered. Today those storms have disappeared. The sea is calm once again. There is unity in our ranks and with the strength that comes from unity we can go forward together to the goal which is now within sight. Two factors have contributed to this state of affairs. One is, as I said before, the acceptance of the new constitution. Its rejection would have meant an increase of communal disharmony. Its acceptance showed the communalists that no further British Commissions would come to Ceylon and that the achievement of freedom was left solely in our hands by the British and that the welfare of the communities did not depend on British support but on goodwill and co-operation between ourselves. The Congress helped in this achievement by accepting the new constitution as a stepping stone to freedom, though it was less than our cherished goal.

The second factor which contributed to this harmony was the creation of the United National Party. As this is the first occasion on which I am addressing you after the U. N. P. was formed, and as you have a resolution dealing with this question for discussion, let me speak a few words on it in explanation of the Working Committee's viewpoint.

I have been often asked why the Ceylon National Congress decided that its members should join the United National Party and why Congressmen should not stand for election to the new Parliament as Congress nominees. I have explained the reasons for this decision to the Congress Committee and at public meetings, but it may be that the public have had no opportunity of knowing those reasons through the press. If is is remembered that the Congress was not started as a political party and never acted or intended to act as a political party whose main object was to capture a majority of seats in the Legislature and administer the government then it is easy to understand our decision.

The Congress was inaugurated in 1918 to obtain self-government for Ceylon. At that time, after over 100 years of British rule we had only one elected representative for the whole island in the Legislative Council, and he too was elected only by those who had an English education. In 1915 as a result of the atrocities committed during the riots we suffered terribly. There were only a handful of Ceylonese in the Civil Service and even less in the other and higher branches of the Public Service, such as the Police. As a result of the agitation of the Congress the elected unofficial members were increased in 1920 and 1924 and the Donoughmore constitution was granted in 1931. Throughout this whole period the Congress kept on its agitation for self-government. Congressmen contested elections, sat in the Legislature and later became Ministers, but never did the Congress become a political party, whose sole idea was to form the government.

Though many sections left the Congress it still remained the one national organisation open to members of all races, religions and political parties who cherished the idea of a Free Lanka.

In 1939 the Congress creed was changed to dominion status and in 1942 to freedom. The report of the Soulbury Commissioners and the White Paper of the British Cabinet of October 1945 went further than any previous offers made to us my the British Government and conceded more than

the Congress had been repeatedly asking for until 1939. This offer even went further than the Minister's Draft Constitution and the Sri Lanka Bill passed by the State Council in 1945. The only bar to the attainment of Dominion Status which was accepted as our goal by the British Cabinet in the White Paper and to obtain which the Cabinet was prepared to help us, was absence of communal harmony. The Tamils, Muslims and other minorities were not in any common organisation with the Sinhalese and there was no united demand for freedom. It seemed that once the unity of the communities was realised in one organisation nothing could stop our country's freedom. To achieve this unity, as President of the Congress, with the sanction of its Working Committee, I had many discussions with Mr. D. S. Senanayake, and the representatives of the Sinhala Maha Sabha, Muslim League, Tamil Congress and other important political bodies and persons. I invited them to join the Congress, and under the banner of Congress to contest the elections on the issue of freedom and in the new Parliament demand that freedom on behalf of a united Ceylon. For different reasons it was not possible to achieve that unity under the Congress name, but it became possible to achieve that unity under another name, where the Congress principles of freedom and non-communal politics were accepted. Thus was born the United National Party.

I have answered the question put to me. May I in turn ask, could any Congressman, true to the Congress principles of freedom and unity, say that we should have kept out of an organisation such as the U. N. P., which accepted our life-long creed ? Could we have selfishly fought elections as Congressmen and sought to capture power in a slave Ceylon ? The goal of Congressmen is not the perpetuation of the Congress ; their goal is freedom. The Congress is only one of the means to attain that end. Once that freedom is attained the Congress has served its purpose.

If joining the U. N. P. will achieve that freedom quicker than our not joining it, then Congressmen who love freedom have no better task before them than to join strengthen the United National Party.

I still think it would have strengthened us in the country if all parties now in the U.N.P. joined the Congress. For, the Congress is the oldest political organization in the country with a proved record of work. We would have had a readymade organisation, with branches throughout the Island and thousands of loyal members trained and disciplined to work on party lines. It was not possible for me or my colleagues to persuade the outsiders to join us, and as I said before, we had either to travel our way alone or join together and form the U.N.P. I hope history will record that we decided right. I know it is difficult for Congress Associations and members to agree that we should submerge our identity to some extent in a new organisation. But remember that that organisation has accepted our two main principles of an Independent Lanka and a United Lanka in their entirety. If we love the cause and not the organisation which we have fashioned to fight for the cause, if our object is to cross the bridge and reach the other bank, then we must not be held back by sentimental love of the means which we have created to achieve our goal. The Congress is only the bridge, the means ; we have forged an even stronger means, and through it we can obtain freedom.

Let us not therefore, however, think that the Congress is not necessary now. Until we are free it is necessary. Congressmen have shaped the new policy of the U. N. P. and let me say that without fear or favour, we intend to make the U.N.P. the most powerful weapon for the attainment of an independent Lanka. Let there be no mistake about it. Let there be no mistake also about the economic policy we intend to pursue. We in the Congress have stood for an advanced economic creed ; we want free Ceylon to be a socialist state. The age of working for private profit, of the accumulation of lands, wealth and industries in a single person or a few persons, is gone. The era of the common man has dawned. I finally believe that the worker must own, partly at least, as a member of a co-operative or through the State, the factory he works in. I firmly believe that the labourer on the estate must own the estate or share in the profits of his labour. England has today a socialist

government. We must have one tomorrow under the new constitution. The Congress therefore enters the U.N.P. to shape and mould its policy and to create an Independent Socialist Lanka.

In this connection let me immediately say that we differ fundamentally from those who want to create a Socialist Ceylon through Marxist methods, whether they be Samasamajists or Communists. The Marxist creed violates against the principles of the four great religions that exist side by side in Ceylon. No Buddhist, Hindu, Christian or Muslim can honestly say he is a Marxist, because Marxism is a purely materialistic doctrine, which denies re-birth, future existence and the working of Kamma. The Buddha has specifically condemned materialism as උච්ඡේද දිට්ඨි. As a Buddhist I call upon all Buddhists as well as followers of other religions to warn the people of this country against the political parties which present Marxism. It is wrongly assumed that Marxists alone want a socialistic state. This is disproved by events in England itself. The socialistic government of England is composed of Christians; they severely condemn Marxists; we too, condemning Marxists, want to create a socialist state which will give the further benefits of democracy which the proletarian dictatorship denies.

I have detained you long enough. The future is full of hope. The countries of Asia are on the march and Ceylon as an invitee to the Pan-Asiatic Conference intends to play her full part in the future of Asia.

D. Ceylon Daily News Report on the Sessions[1]

Protest Walk-out at Congress Meeting
Series of Lively Debates

Fifty-five delegates attended the Congress sessions, and the proceedings were characterised by lively debates on the

1. *CDN*, 20 January 1947. The report highlights George E. de Silva's speech, with over half of it being devoted to extracts from his address. We exclude this portion (the first half) since the full text is presented separately. The headlines also referred to points made by George E. de Silva and were as follows:

   Why Congress Decided to Join United National Party
   Working for a Free Socialist Lanka.

It would be invidious for me to select further names to mention. Apart from those who rendered executive service the names of Messrs. F. R. Senanayake, E. W. Jayewardene, George Wille, A. F. Molamure, Hon'ble T. B. Jayah, Dr. Kobbekaduwe and last but not the least, the Hon. Mr. D. S. Senanayake, Free Lanka's first Prime Minister, must be mentioned as Congress stalwarts. Those who have rendered signal services to the country's cause from the ranks of the Ceylon National Congress are almost legion. They did so without any thought of recompense, but their names shall always be enshrined in the hearts of a grateful nation, for whose self-respect and self determination they fought a life long struggle. May I in passing suggest that it would be in the fitness of things that the names of those who have made outstanding contributions to the country's forward march of progress and development should be inscribed in a roll of honour on the independence column that is being constructed to commemorate the independence of our country.

Let me now pass on to a rather prosaic idea expressed in some quarters that, now that the country has gained Freedom the Ceylon National Congress having achieved its objective should be relegated to a pigeon-hole in a museum or be cast into the limbo of forgotten things. This is absolutely fantastic reasoning. The task before the Ceylon National Congress is now more onerous and responsible than ever. It must be the vigilant custodian of the priceless gift it has secured, and it must see that it is used for the maximisation of the happiness of all people.

As the Architect of the freedom it has won, it is most competent and qualified to usher in the New Lanka of our dreams—a land of peace and plenty, of economic security, free from want and disease. After all, political freedom is one of the many freedoms which is our birth ri~ht. We have still to fight for others equally, if not, more vital and indispensable. Our economic freedom, freedom from disease, freedom from fear, freedom from want. To do away with the Congress at this important juncture of our country's history will

be tantamount to the killing of the parents upon the birth of an off-spring, on the pretext that the parents functions to produce an off-spring having been fulfilled, the parents are no longer necessary. Need I dilate on the futility of such an unwise act? Our freedom at its infant stage must be jealously nurtured, guarded and protected with that same loving care and devotion which parents lavish on their new-born off-spring. Who shall deny to the Ceylon National Congress the paternity of our new-born freedom? Assuredly a paramount duty is cast upon the Ceylon National Congress as the parent, to protect this freedom.

Ladies and gentlemen, let us refer to India, whose Government, on every important issue, considers it imperative to consult the Indian National Congress and considers the latter's co-operation indispensable. Let me submit with all the emphasis at my command that the existence of the Ceylon National Congress, as a powerful political body, *is more important now than ever, as its creed and ideals* are the only safeguard this land has against the probable menace of Fascism on the one side and the dangers of Communism on the other. I think this would be sufficient to explode the idea that the Congress has outlived its existence. Let me reiterate that this sessions of the Congress ushers in a now more significant phase of its existence, namely, to devote its efforts to implement the freedom it has won and to utilise it for the highest happiness of the People.

"The old order changeth yielding place to new." To the most die-hard critics of our freedom it would be quite patent now that the independence it have won is the real substance and that we have the power to set our own house in order. But are we implementing our freedom? Are we making any effort to remove the dusty cob-webs and antiquated shibboleths of the past? The machinery of the *Government is today what it was in the past, as originally* designed to further the interests of an imperialistic bureaucracy. The first step that must be taken is to effect a radical change in the machinery of the Gove hi

is today an ever-increasing burden on the taxpayer, not merely by its effeteness, the tacking of appendiges [*sic*] repugnant to the old syshence [*sic*]. Corruption in our public services, the menace of nepotism crippling efficiency and competition, top heavy staffs, the non co-ordinative red tapism that delays speedy action—all these evils must be eradicated from the machinery of the Government if the Government is to utilise the freedom we have won for the benefit of the people. And Government should be backed by strong, articulate, public opinion. Herein the Ceylon National Congress has to pay a significant part in the future. Even as it is the architect of our freedom, it must be the architect of new institutions " broad based upon the people's will."

Ladies and gentlemen, as I had mentioned earlier, we must utilise our political freedom to secure other freedoms most vital to our existence on earth as a self respecting people. In this land where nature has bestowed with such lavish kindness her choicest gifts, it is most deplorable that poverty, unemployment, want, destitution and starvation should meet our eyes wherever we go. Our primary duty therefore is to address ourselves to this most urgent problem of removing the cause of poverty and raising the standard of the masses who are today the victims of an economic stranglehold. What purpose does it serve if we are politically independent when the bulk of our people are trodden down by poverty and disease? The primary object of all our planning must be the well-being of the masses. " Health and peace and sweet content " is the birthright of a politically independent people and if we deny them these blessings our political independence is a mere farce.

How then, gentlemen, could this be achieved. We must completely re-build the economic structure of the island. Our people must be taught to simplify and supply their own needs. It is futile to ape the standard of living of the West. As an Eastern race we have our own national standards best suited for the development of a healthy, strong and virile people. How many of us envy the simple life of

the hardy villager, his hearth and his home. It is this simplicity we must infuse into the life of the nation. We must discard the tawdry and tinsel of the West and only adopt what is good and strong. Next, to supply our needs is no easy task, 300 years of foreign domination has crippled the self sufficiency of our race and for our elementary needs we are now dependent on India, Burma and other countries. It must indeed be revolting to the spirits of our ancient illustrious kings that this fair island of ours which was known in their time as "the granary of the East" should be now slavishly dependent on other countries for its staple food. It is this perhaps that prompted the President of the Indian National Congress to remark that we should integrate with India. Whilst thanking him for this gratuitous suggestion it is all the more incumbent on our part to take immediate and positive measures to assert our national individuality not merely in the political sphere but with even greater emphasis in the economic sphere by being an entirely self sufficient people.

I need not dilate on the very comprehensive methods the present Government has adopted to achieve this end. But theories will not carry us far. The urgency of the moment demands immediate action. Let us hope that the long delayed Hydro Electric scheme at Laxapana will be an accomplished fact in the not too distant future. Let us also hope that the Galoya scheme will not be exposed to the same vicissitudes as Laxapana and that with the men and material at its command substantial progress will be made ere long. Power is necessary for large scale industry and until this power is available we cannot expect to make headway in the nationalisation of our industries which must be a central feature in our economic policy. At present, however, we can address ourselves to the immediate problems that need urgent solution. Unemployment is a growing menace in the land. This is one of the legacies of the last world war. We read in the press the distressing stories of how men trained in the use of fire-arms of which they are now in illicit possession stalk about the country in the role of gangsters. Unless and until

is today an ever-increasing burden on the taxpayer, not merely by its effeteness, the tacking of appendiges [*sic*] repugnant to the old syshence [*sic*]. Corruption in our public services, the menace of nepotism crippling efficiency and competition, top heavy staffs, the non co-ordinative red tapism that delays speedy action—all these evils must be eradicated from the machinery of the Government if the Government is to utilise the freedom we have won for the benefit of the people. And Government should be backed by strong, articulate, public opinion. Herein the Ceylon National Congress has to pay a significant part in the future. Even as it is the architect of our freedom, it must be the architect of new institutions "broad based upon the people's will."

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[illegible]

found for those who have been suddenly thrown out of employment crime will be on the increase. This is an urgent question.

The policy of the State to provide land for the landless must be more vigorously pressed and the urban areas which are today congested by over-population should be relieved. Acquisition of lands for large scale settlements and cultivation, the opening of state farms, housing schemes for the working and middle classes are also urgent matters that need immediate attention. Referring to housing, whatever methods the state has adopted to prevent unscrupulous landlords from victimising their tenants the fact remains that landlords continue to devise various and ingenious methods of circumventing the provisions of the Rent Restriction Ordinance.

The housing problem must be viewed in a perspective embracing the whole island. It must be a chief feature in a system of town and village planning and the state should prohibit indiscriminate building which is such an unsightly spectacle in most of our towns. I venture to say that it is the middle classes that suffer most under the acuteness of the present housing problem and they need immediate relief.

Passing on to local government we welcome the creation of more municipal and urban councils, but are our local governing institutions the same independent, self governing bodies they were? It is true that there should be co-ordination of our local institutions based upon a definite policy but today under the guise of this co-ordination our local bodies are tied to the apron string of a Local Government Commission created by reactionaries, the individuality of our erstwhile dignified corporations are lost, their powers are reduced to a nullity and local government has become just an apology for what in reality should be the hub of our democratic institutions. Conferences of municipal councils, of urban councils, and of village committees elaborately convened, wherein fulsome

speeches are made extolling the virtues of local government and of its local sponsors, really serve no useful purpose when the whole system as it exists today is a mere negation of the principles of local government and, far from advancing the cause of democracy, is a serious setback to its forward march.

Referring to co-operative development let me emphatically state that the prosperity of our island, the efficiency of our nation and our economic stability will depend in a large measure on the progress of the co-operative movement in Ceylon. We have already reaped its manifold blessings. It is our co-operatives that kept the black market in check during the critical days of the war and secured for the rich and poor alike the essential commodities at prices subsidised by the state. It is for us now to foster and develop these institutions which were created to meet an emergency when private business failed to rise to the occasion. Is it not possible to nationalise both the import as well as the export branches through these co-operatives? Is it not possible to launch extensive agricultural schemes through co-operatives. Housing schemes, industrial schemes, and farming—all these are fertile avenues for co-operative development. The co-operative movement is really the nursery of democratic education, a training ground in the shouldering of responsibility and in developing the consciousness that we are of the people, for the people and by the people. But even this great institution is capable of being abused. Strict care must be taken in selecting personnel for its efficient working. To draft on to its ranks unscrupulous men who will exploit the movement would mean its abortive end. The co-operative moment demands the best of this island's men and women, people of integrity who will not stoop to corruption and who will not succumb to temptation. To come to the matter of free education—the most contentious question of the day, I shall not hesitate to express that the scheme of free education as it was evolved by the last State Council is now being seriously undermined by those in authority on the ground that the State cannot afford the cost. I am

not unmindful of the fact that these defects may be removed and what in reality is a great blessing to this island should remain so for all time. I submit that the present Government is guilty of a flagrant breach of faith when it endeavours by artful methods to shelve a scheme which they hold in trust and for which they are answerable to the nation. The crying need of today is not a luxury university. It is an education which must reach the masses so that they may reap the best benefits of our freedom. Today illiteracy stalks the land. In spite of nearly 20 years of adult franchise we have not been able to make substantial headway in stamping out illiteracy, because of the glaring defects of our educational policy. Mass education, village welfare societies, community centres should not be mere amateur efforts and the hot beds of political propaganda. They must be incorporated into the educational policy of the island and trained personnel must man these institutions. We do not for a moment underrate the importance of secondary and university education. But elementary education must have its pride of place and must be our foremost concern.

As regards secondary and university education, what purpose will it serve to foist upon the community a class of pundits "well versed in learned lore." They will be an irksome liability on society and potential reactionaries who will concentrate their time and their talents to work against the established order of things. On the contrary higher education must be on a practical basis. Opportunities for research work must be provided. We have in this island sufficient talents to keep pace with the tremendous advances made in the outside world in the sphere of medical and scientific discovery. Given the opportunity our men will be able to make substantial contributions in these spheres. It would not be necessary for us then to import experts from abroad. Our own men, actuated by a deep love for their country, must be given this opportunity to devote their talents to the service of their country. Free

education must go from strength to strength. It will be a most profitable investment which will pay the biggest dividends.

I now refer to the health services of our island. I personally deplore the tendency of the present Government to discredit the work of the last State Council in the matter of our health services. You will remember that as Minister of Health when I submitted to the State Council my scheme for the establishment of Rural Hospitals and Maternity Homes I met with overwhelming support, and foremost amongst those who applauded the scheme was the present Minister of Health. It is therefore very unfortunate that this Honourable gentlemen should go about the country minimising the value of my work but at the same time open the remaining Rural Hospitals and Maternity Homes which were part of my scheme. Who will deny, delegates, that these institutions serve a crying need. When under the old regime hospitals were built in the most salubrious parts of the island to cater to estate labourers my policy was to concentrate on those parts where our villages were in dire need of medical facilities and where with the ravages of material [*sic*] mortality rate was abnormally high. To have received nine million rupees as voluntary contributions from the public for this scheme is by itself an eloquent testimony of [*sic*] the public approval of the scheme.

I have just heard of the present Minister's declaration that he will eradicate malaria within the next five years. Memories are indeed very short but they cannot be so short as to forget the fact that it was under the aegis of my Ministry that the great D.D.T. campaign against malaria was launched. If handled with care and efficiency this scheme will be able to reclaim the dry zone which was once the seat of our civilisation.

In rendering an account of my tutelage as Minister of Health I was able in 1947 to show by vital statistics that this island had made vast strides in its health services, but

surely the policy of the present Government should not be to decry us but to build on the foundations we have securely laid.

Passing from matters national to the large sphere of international problems we cannot be unmindful of the sweeping changes that have taken place in every part of the globe and the development of a new order wherein the highest attributes of human nature find their best expression and fulfilment. The last world war was fought to vindicate the principle that in an age where force—material force, appeared to be the predominant factor in the settlement of international disputes that small nations cannot be crushed in defiance of international good faith by the arbitrary will of a strong and over-mastering power. The victory of the Allied nations over the totalitarian states has ushered in the golden era for small nations like ourselves and in the United Nations Organisation we see the realisation of Tennyson's vision when he "dipt into the future" and saw:

"The vision of the World and all the wonder that would be. Heard the War drums throbbed no longer with the battle flags all furled
In the Parliament of Man, the Federation of the World."

Our contribution to the creation of this new order was by no means meagre. It was at our gates that the Japanese advance was arrested and our island was "the Bastion of the East" for the Allied nations. Not merely in the field of civil defence but militarily too we gave of our best and our soldiers covered themselves with glory in the manner in which they acquitted themselves during the Japanese raids on Colombo and Trincomalie.

In the wake of the war therefore followed the grant of freedom and self determination to Burma, India, Pakistan and finally to Sri Lanka. It was for this right—the inherent right of a nation to determine its own form of Government unfettered by any outside intervention that the war was fought and the flower of the world's manhood was slain in the field of battle. The United Nations organisation must be

the vigilant custodian of this right which is the most cherished legacy of the world war. However, it is a source of intense disappointment to us, that due to misunderstandings amongst the Big Powers and particularly due to Soviet Russia, we have still not been admitted to the United Nations Organisation. Your Executive will remember the efforts the Ceylon National Congress had made in this direction even long before we became a Dominion, because we felt that it is of paramount importance to us as a self-respecting nation to be a member of this great Comity of Nations. Let us therefore evince the earnest hope that ere long even Soviet Russia will realise that Sri Lanka is the home of sovereign democratic people. Our membership in the Asian Conference at Delhi and the invitation your President received to the International and Cultural Peace Conference of the World in Poland are nevertheless indication of our international position and prestige.

Coming closer we see East Asia an area of conflagration. Civil war in China with the old regime fast tottering, unrest in Indo-China, the Viet-nam challenging French authority, the Indonesian struggle for independence from Dutch rule and the Karens defying the newly found [*sic*] Burmese Republic. Even in the Continent of India there is the gathering gloom, for, on the Kashmir issue the Indian Union and Pakistan are still at daggers drawn Our close proximity to the warring and war-like nations must make us exercise the utmost care and caution. Above all there are the tentacles of the Communist Octupus greedily trying to seize South East Asia in its grip. These, delegates, are the signs of the times and we must be absolutely alive to the dangers that are not merely around us but even within us. Our Island must continue to be the Bastion of the East, but this time, not of the Allied Powers but the bulwark of Democracy.

Friends and Delegates,

This is the fourth occasion I have addressed you as your President. I have been at your helm when you arrived at the most momentous decisions in our political history. In

1929 I was your President when you decided to accept the Donoughmore Constitution. In 1945 I presided at your 25th [*sic*] Sessions when the burning question of the day was the Report of the Soulbury Commission. Again in 1946 as your President I asked you to finally decide to accept the proposals contained in the White Paper of October 31, 1945. Today, under circumstances no less significant, it is my unique privilege to have addressed you when I have endeavoured to emphasise the very important role the Ceylon National Congress has played in shaping the island's destiny and our duties, responsibilities and obligations for the future.

I have exploded the myth that we are a spent force. We must therefore dedicate ourselves to the task that lies ahead of us—to reap the fruits of the Freedom we have won. This involves, friends and delegates, even greater sacrifices than those we have made in our struggle for freedom. It is in the fitness of things that at this important epoch in our political history we should receive as our Governor-General no less a person than Lord Soulbury, the very architect of the Constitution which was the harbinger of our Freedom. With his deep and abiding interest in our aspirations and his sincere love for our nation, could there be anyone more eminently fitted than Lord Soulbury to occupy the gubanatorial chair at this juncture? Whilst extending to him a warm welcome once again to our shores, we are also in duty bound to record our sincere appreciation of the valuable services of our retiring Governor-General Sir Henry Moore whose name will be enshrined in our annals as a great and good Governor who realised the futility of imperialistic aims and accordingly gave us his closest co-operation. Finally the happiest augury of our future lies in our present Prime Minister, D. S. Senanayake, who is the highest embodiment of the aspirations of Sri Lanka. We hail him as our Leader and whilst we offer him our tribute of gratitude and affection it is our fervent hope that long will he be spared to guide us to our common destiny.

Friends and Delegates, I will not address you any longer. If I have trespassed on your time it is because I felt that this was a unique occasion and in giving you an account of any tutelage as your President it was my duty to refer both to the past as well as to the future. The past, dear delegates, is the best index to the future, for it is the inspiration that we can derive from the past that will mould our future. The history of the Ceylon National Congress is the history of the efforts of a people who, having been under boundage for over three hundred years, finally overcame these bonds and rose as a Free and Independent nation, and as an equal member of that great Comity of Nations. The Ceylon National Congress has created tradition and this together with our ancient traditions and culture shall inspire up to go from strength to strength until we make this island home of ours, set in the silver sea, the home of freedom wherein we shall enjoy the matchless blessings, "health, peace and sweet content."

C. CEYLON DAILY NEWS REPORT ON THE SESSIONS[1]

Task Before Congress Now "More Onerous"
Dissolution Motion Out of Order
Discussion At Special Sessions

The task before the Ceylon National Congress was now more onerous and responsible than ever. It must be the vigilant custodian of the priceless gift it had secured, and it must see that it was used for the maximum happiness of all, said Mr. George E. de Silva, President of the Ceylon National Congress, speaking at the special sessions of the Congress held on Saturday morning when he ruled out of order the motion of Mr. J. R. Jayewardene, Minister of Finance, to dissolve the Congress.

Mr. Jayewardene in moving the resolution said that as Ceylon had achieved freedom, which was the chief aim of the Congress, the Congress should now be dissolved.

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1 *CDN*, 30 May 1949.

Mr. Gilbert Perera, raising a point of order, said that according to its constitution the Congress had more than one object. But the motion of Mr. Jayewardene, "The Congress, having achieved its goal of freedom for Ceylon, should now be dissolved," indicated that the Congress had only one object. The Congress, he said, had been established for the attainment of more than one object. He wanted a ruling on the motion.

Only One Aim Reached

Invited to speak on the point of order raised, Mr. Abraham Silva, a former Secretary of the Congress, supported the point of order raised and said that the Congress was established for the attainment of three objects and out of those only one aim had been achieved and it was unwise for them to rest satisfied with that and abandon their other aims.

Mr. P. Galoluwa pointed out that the freedom they got was not exactly the freedom the Congress fought for. They should have complete freedom—economic freedom and social freedom. Mr. K. A. Albert Perera said that that motion was not considered by the Executive Committee. It was only a motion sponsored by an individual member and did not have the sanction of the executive authority.

Mr. S. H. S. de Silva said that the Congress had by no means completed their work, begun by their leaders of the past, by the mere achievement of political freedom. They had still to work towards the attainment of economic and social freedom.

Scope For Criticism

Mr. George E. de Silva said that his ruling was that the resolution was not constitutional. If Ceylon enjoyed complete freedom there was justification to scrap the Congress. According to the constitution of the Congress it was laid down that the Congress should have a party in Parliament. If the country was to improve they should give everyone the opportunity to offer fair and just criticism in the conduct of government.

The U. N. P., he said, was only a two-year old infant and they could not expect it to do everything. The prosaic idea expressed in some quarters that, the country having now gained freedom and the Ceylon Congress its objective, the Congress should be relegated to a pigeon-hole or a museum or be cast into the limbo of forgotten things was absolutely fantastic reasoning.

Time was, he said, when people who were today the active sponsors of their new-born freedom were in fact very sceptical about their claim for complete freedom and were by no means sanguine about their efforts. It was to the credit of the Congress that at no stage in its long-drawn struggle for their country's emancipation did it deflect from the goal to which it had dedicated itself. They carried on the struggle never despairing.

Difficulties stiffened their resolution, and today, though on different political platforms, speakers vie with one another in extolling their Independence, it must remain said for all time that the island's sovereign status today was the result of 30 years of ceaseless effort, unremitting zeal and sacrifice on the part of the Congress.

Freedom From Disease

As the architect of the freedom it had won, it was most competent and qualified to usher in the new Lanka of their dreams—a land of peace and plenty, of economic security, and free from want and disease. After all, political freedom was one of the many freedoms which was their birthright. They had still to fight for others equally, if not, more vital and indispensable—their economic freedom, freedom from disease, freedom from fear and freedom from want.

To do away with the Congress at that important juncture of their country's history would be tantamount to the killing of the parent upon the birth of an offsprin on the pretext that, the parents' functions to produce an offspring having been fulfilled, the parents were no longer necessary. Need he dilate on the futility of such an unwise act ?

Their freedom at its infant stage must be jealously nurtured, guarded and protected with that same loving care and devotion which parents lavish on their new-born off-spring. Who should deny to the Congress the paternity of their new-born freedom. Assuredly a paramount duty was cast upon the Congress as the parent, to protect that freedom.

Congress To Meet Again

Mr. Dudley Senanayake, Minister of Agriculture and Lands, said that the ruling was that the motion, which was the only subject on the agenda, was out of order as it was unconstitutional, and therefore the business for which the meeting was summoned was over and they should disperse. Mr. H. A. Koattegoda also spoke in support of the suggestion to disperse.

Mr. Gilbert Perera said that if they wanted to discuss any question they could do so at a meeting which would be convened a few months hence and all members and affiliated associations would have the opportunity to express their views then.

The meeting then dispersed.

45. TWENTY NINTH ANNUAL SESSIONS, 7-8 JANUARY 1950

A. Agenda: Resolutions[1]

Notice is hereby given that the 30th [sic] sessions of the Congress will be held at Phoenix Tea Gardens, Ward Street, Kandy, on the 7th instant at 1.30 p.m. and the 8th at 8.30 a.m. to transact the following business:

1. 1.30 p.m. Hoisting of the National Flag and singing of the National Anthem
2. 2.00 p.m. Address of the Chairman of the Reception Committee
3. 2.15 p.m. President's Address
4. 6.00 p.m. Resolutions.

1. Inasmuch as the present agreement with Great Britain, granting Military, Naval and Air Bases, was entered into without the prior approval of the country and inasmuch as this agreement is inimical to its best interests and as a matter of fact has put into jeopardy our very existence by committing this country to an International bloc in the present unsettled state of world affairs, this Congress is firmly of opinion that this agreement with Great Britain should be forthwith terminated.

2. Inasmuch as our present position in the Commonwealth is liable to be misunderstood in International Assemblies and as it is not in the best interests of the country to leave our status in dispute, this Congress is of opinion that this country should declare itself a Republic.

3. This Congress condemns the present educational policy of Government whereby about eight lacs or half the number of children of school-going age in the country do not receive any kind of education and demands its immediate revision so as to bring the benefits of education within the reach of every poor child in the country.

1. Contained in a leaflet which has both English and Sinhalese versions. Located among the Gilbert Perera MSS ; C. N. A., 25. 21/12.

4. As the present Excise Policy of the Government is more conducive to the increase rather than a decrease of the consumption of liquor this Congress is of opinion that immediate steps should be taken to mitigate this evil with a view to its ultimate elimination.

5. This Congress condemns the present policy of the Government of rejecting wholesale almost all proposals of the opposition, whether beneficial to the country or not, as not being conducive to the proper development of a Parliamenentary or Democratic form of Government.

6. This Congress views with alarm the extravagance of Government with regard to personal emoluments of the higher staff of Government and generally in the conduct of Government whilst the standard of living of the masses continues to be miserably low.

7. This Congress is of opinion that a Commission should be forthwith appointed to investigate the causes that led to the mass retirement of public servants who were holding high office, as a contented public service is indispensable to the good Government of the country.

8. This Congress condemns the practice of the U.N.P. of obtaining large donations to party funds by rewarding such donors with high offices in Government or connected institutions as being tantamount to bribery and corruption and thus lowering the public morals of the country.

9. This Congress is of opinion that the gross injustice caused to the people of the country, particularly in the Kandyan areas, by an alien Government under the Waste Land Ordinance, should be undone by restoring the land thus seized to its original owners and heirs but in keeping with modern democratic tendencies.

10. This Congress is of opinion that the policy and programme of the Ceylon National Congress should be revised to suit the present changed conditions of the country and that it should launch a vigorous campaign for creating

a healthy public opinion throughout the country by giving the masses a political education that will make them worthy citizens of a free country.

11. This Congress directs the All-Ceylon Congress Committee to take steps forthwith to make such amendments as are necessary to the constitution of the Congress to suit the changed conditions and to define and publish its future policy and programme, and that such amendments, programme and policy be placed before a special sessions for the acceptance of the Congress.

5. To transact any other business duly notified.

6. Vote of Thanks.

Gilbert Perera,
Hony. Joint Secretary,
Ceylon National Congress,
31 December, 1949

B. W. L. VITHARANA'S ADDRESS[1]

Fellow Delegates, Friends,

It is my pleasant task to welcome you here today on behalf of the Kandy Association of the Ceylon National Congress. Considering the eminence of most of the men who performed this function before, I undertook it with not a little trepidation. But I was greatly heartened by the enormous enthusiasm that was shown by Congress members in deciding to participate actively again in the affairs of the country. During the last two years we expected a good deal from the government of this country since we are now our own masters. But the expectations of the country have not been realised. Your presence here in such large numbers is a complete refutation of those who say that now that

1. Dr. W. L. Vitharana was Chairman of the Reception Committee. His address and that of George E. de Silva are contained in a pamphlet (19 pages), bearing their photographs on the cover, printed by the Swadeshi Printers, Colombo. This pamphlet was also part of the Gilbert Perera MSS ; see C. N. A., 25. 21/13.

we have gained our independence there is no need for Congress to continue. One thing is clear as daylight from what has been happening in the country during the last two years. If we are to enjoy our newly won freedom there must be eternal vigilance on the part of the electorate. It would appear that the task of winning freedom is easier than making full use of it. There is no organisation more suited to protect the rights we have thus laboriously won than the Ceylon National Congress, the oldest political organisation of the country. Political freedom alone cannot bring happiness to the poverty stricken masses of this country. Political freedom may have given everything they wanted to a few in privileged positions but not to the masses who are still grovelling in poverty and ignorance. More than any other political institution in the country this Congress is responsive to the sufferings of our people. As a matter of fact it was the atrocities perpetrated on an innocent people by a foreign government that created the Ceylon National Congress and moved it to action. This spirit is still there and it is this spirit of service to our fellowmen that gives vitality and life to this Congress. Its spirit can never be killed. It is our duty to protect the masses from the indifference of a body of people who can never know what real suffering is and from those who are seeking to exploit their suffering to foist upon this country an alien system that will destroy for ever our personal and political freedom.

It may be argued that within the short period of two years the present government could not have brought about all the necessary changes and introduced all the necessary reforms for the amelioration of the masses. For the last nineteen years the government of the country has been in the hands of those who are now governing us, but there has been hardly any improvement in the condition of the people.

I am glad that the All-Ceylon Congress Committee decided to hold this important session here. Here at Kandy we feel somewhat neglected by government.

There was no more appropriate place to celebrate our newly won freedom than this ancient city. It is here that we lost our last vestige of freedom and here we should have regained it. When the Sinhala flag went up on Independence Day it should have been at the identical spot where it was hauled down by the British. Instead this great national and historic event took place in a tin shed decorated for the occasion at enormous expense and dismantled soon afterwards. Posterity will search in vain for that spot, for that Hall where this great event took place; Yet our ancient Halls here were empty at that time.

Although large sums of money are being daily spent in all parts of the island, particularly in the North and Eastern Provinces, nothing has been done in these areas. No industries have been established here that would give employment to the people. No peasantry is poorer than the people here. The land that should be theirs has been expropriated by a foreign Government for the benefit of alien exploiters. The whole place is crying out for justice.

But yet the only thing that we have got is a commission to enquire into a state of affairs that are well known to everybody. I do hope that the Congress will take a special interest in these areas and I am sure that it will find ample opportunities for service.

I have to thank you very much for coming here in such large numbers at our invitation and I do hope that you will overlook any shortcomings in our humble hospitality. It is my duty now to call upon your President-elect for the ensuing year, Mr. George E. de Silva, to deliver his presidential address. He is no stranger to you. His name is a house-hold one in this country, which is the reward of a life time of service. He has been your president in 1930 and from 1945 onwards. He is our tried friend and it is a pleasure for me to welcome him here on this occasion.

I have much pleasure in calling upon Mr. de Silva now to deliver his address.

C. George E. de Silva's Presidential Address[1]

Friends, it is my first duty to thank you most sincerely for the confidence you have placed in me by re-electing me your President for the ensuing year.

As you know the last three years have been a period of political inactivity which the Congress more or less placed upon itself, as we thought, at that time, for the good of the country. When the question of the acceptance of the Soulbury constitution was under discussion, we decided to accept it, as it certainly marked a step forward in our struggle for freedom. We did more. We also decided to suspend our political activities in order to enable the country to present a united front and permitted our members to come forward for election on the ticket of the United National Party, which we were told would be in a position to bring unity between the various communities. But such a hope has been entirely falsified. That organization consists today of a number of warring factions whose personal interests are not reconcilable.

In this conglomeration of individuals and factions there is neither method, loyalty, nor discipline. We find bitter antagonism between Ministers. We find for personal considerations work that should be entrusted to one Minister given over to another Minister. Thus we find conflict, waste, and inefficiency. We find the leader of the Labour Party in the Cabinet but outside we find U. N. P. candidates contesting Labour candidates both in central and local government elections. We find men totally unacceptable to the vast majority of voters in the country holding ministerial posts. Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam is one such case. Mr. Ponnambalam more than any other person has been responsible for the creation of bitterness of communal feeling never before witnessed in this country. He, more than any other, attempted to set back the clock of political progress of this country. He wanted by representations both before the Soulbury commission and the Secretary of State to impose his fifty

1. From C. N. A., 25. 21/9/13.

fifty theory of representation. The results of the bitterness thus created by him is [sic] still potent. We find his camp-followers sincerely adhering to his creed and now demanding the division of the country under the guise of Federation. This man has been now taken to the bosom of the Prime Minister without assurances, without explanations, without recantations. A government that has the least respect for public opinion would have given some form of explanation to the country.

It has utterly failed to bring about real communal harmony. The presence of a few minority members in the cabinet or the receptions given to Ministers in certain communal areas cannot be regarded as having brought about a change of heart in the minorities. They have not yet become integral parts of the United National Party and their presence has been secured by the lure of office. In short the present government is the collection of a heterogeneous number of people held together by the lure of office and other personal considerations, and not by any ideal or party discipline. Such a state of affairs has made it absolutely necessary for the present government to have recourse to all manner of political devices which, to put it mildly, are not conducive to the development of a healthy democratic government. The first essential for such a government is a large number of offices for distribution

This object has been gained by the creation of 13 Ministers and a large number of Parliamentary Secretaries. To this number may be added the Speaker, who does not normally vote, and the Deputy Speaker and the Chairman of Committees. Of these not more than four are in the Senate, the rest being in the House of Representatives.

In a House where sixty Members can have a working majority the presence of such a large number of members who, besides other things, are financially interested in the government, is a great danger to the country. To this number must also be added the nominated block [sic] whose choice depends on the Prime Minister. The extreme lengths to

which the present government have gone in the creation of unnecessary posts may be illustrated from one or two examples.

Under the Donoughmore constitution one Minister was responsible for Labour, Industry, and Commerce. This work is now done by three Ministers and two Parliamentary Secretaries. There is no doubt that there has been a slight increase in work but certainly there is no justification for the creation of five posts. In this connection it should also be remembered that there are three Permanent Secretaries, drawing very large salaries, and three private secretaries to the three Ministers.

The Minister of Works and Transport was in charge of the Public Works Department, the Railway, and the Post Office which included the Telecommunication Department. But now there are two Ministers with two Parliamentary Secretaries, two Permanent Secretaries and two Private Secretaries. Not only in Parliament but also outside it a very large number of extremely profitable jobs are being daily created to which nobody but favourites of government are appointed. Thus we find a large number of defeated candidates occupying offices of profit. Appointments are also made use of to increase party funds. Evidence of this can be found in the proceedings of the Colombo Municipal Council Bribery Commission when it came to light that a certain Senator had given a cheque for Rs. 35,000 to the U.N.P.

Yet again you will remember that prior to the Soulbury constitution the country condemned in no unmistakable terms the granting of honours. Now it has become the very life blood of the parliamentary party and honours are given with a liberality not known before.

We find men of very doubtful reputation holding very high office. Men who have admitted to having bribed public servants, knowing that it is a criminal act to do so, are in the Senate. Man who are accountable to government in the conduct of certain public services are in the inner councils

of the U.N.P. rubbing shoulders, nay, dictating to Ministers. The only qualification for admittance to U.N.P. favour is money. To quote from the admirable address of the President of the Buddhist Congress, " Time was when this island home of our was rightly famed as the Dharma Dipa. Today they had earned notoriety as a land of thugs and racketeers, gamblers and black marketeers, seething with corruption. Instead of trying to rescue themselves from the morass into which they had fallen, it would appear as though they were deliberately sinking deeper into the mire." Such a state of affairs must necessarily lead to the further evils of nepotism and favouritism which are rampant in the present government. If any evidence is necessary of the presence of a most unsatisfactory state in the present administration it is found in the mass exodus of highly placed public servants It is of very great importance that a through inquiry should be held into the causes that led to such a state of affairs, because a contented public service is indispensable to the good government of the country.

Not only is it necessary for the present parliamentary party to have recourse to these discreditable methods to maintain its power but it is also in its own interest to keep the masses of the country in a state of political immaturity, the objective of the party being power at any cost.

In the game of throwing dust in the eyes of the voter the Minister of Transport and Works is an adept. He has been leading religious pilgrimages to various shrines of different denominations. Fortunately for the country this kind of activity is confined to this Minister alone. Other Ministers have their own devices. There is an Assistant Secretary attached to the Minister of Finance who is engaged in propaganda for the government, although there is an expensive information department. The Home Minister uses the Rural Development Department.

Pure undiluted corruption is also rampant in the Government party today. Most the members that have been found

guilty of taking bribes or giving bribes in the Colombo Municipal have been U.N.P. nominees for recent elections. Such nominations were only withdrawn at a belated date.

Besides it is a notorious fact that our Prime Minister, instead of welcoming investigations into the conduct of Ministers when allegations of a serious nature are made, adopts an attitude of hostility and obstruction. The recent failure of the Prime Minister to appoint an impartial commission to investigate the conduct of a certain Minister as requested by the entire Opposition struck a fell blow to the development of a healthy public morality. His failure to accept the resignation of the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Home Affairs when under serious charges is another instance of the government's non-responsiveness to public opinion.

I charge the present government of encouraging indirectly the growth of Marxism in this country by its corruption, extravagance and inefficiency.

The present education system of the country upon which nearly Rupees Ninety Millions are spent has become a powerful means of creating Communists. In spite of this colossal expenditure eight lakhs of children, or half the total number of children of school-going age, do not receive any form of education. This vast number of children is bound to fall a prey to the Marxist propaganda machine. On the other hand free university education is creating an enormous number of pseudo intellectuals who can never hope to obtain employment in keeping with their education. A starving intellectual, pseudo or otherwise, is a certain Marxist.

While thus half the children of the country of school age is [*sic*] receiving no education we have the ludicrous spectacle of children going to free schools, such as Royal College, in luxurious cars. The education system is in need of immediate revision so as to bring education within the reach of every poor child in the country.

The industrial activities of government have been one long tale of unrelieved failure. Nor has it given to private enterprise any help to industrialise the country. Any interference of government in private industry has been more detrimental than beneficial. This failure of government means so many unemployed that fall a natural and almost inevitable prey to communistic propaganda.

Never before has the country witnessed such a degree of extravagance, both public and private, as during the past three years. Liberty has been interpreted to mean licence.

In the parliamentary sphere everything has been conceived of in the most extravagant scale. Ministerial car allowances are about Rs. 1,000 a month, besides large entertainment allowances. The expenditure on the Speaker's residence alone is nearly Rs. 1,000 per month. Several lakhs of rupees has been wasted on Sravasti which is now found to be unsuitable to house Members of Parliament. Salaries of higher public servants have been increased to a degree never dreamt of before, and they still continue to enjoy the same privileges as granted to foreigners under an alien government.

To take one case. The Chairman of Gal Oya Corporation, who is a former Secretary of Finance under the Donoughmore Constitution, is paid a monthly salary of Rs. 2,500 besides the huge pension he is already drawing from government. This is in direct violation of the financial regulations of the government because no retired public servant can be employed under government at a salary which combined with his pension would be more than the salary he was drawing in his substantive post.

There is a multiplicity of foreign legations conducted on the most extravagant scale. Is there any need for High Commissioners and Ambassadors for India, Pakistan and Burma which are within a few hours' reach of Colombo? Even so, is it quite necessary to have representatives of the highest rank whereas trade commissioners will suffice?

The expense connected with Ceylon House at London is notorious. A great deal of expenditure was incurred with a view to making Ceylon House take the place of the Crown Agents. Although the decision to go back to the Crown Agents may be welcomed this waste of money could have been prevented if a little foresight had been used.

The enormous expenditure incurred on building the University at Peradeniya is another instance of the extravagance and inefficiency of government. The government did not know how much the University will cost and now the scheme has been modified. A poor country like ours cannot waste money on ornamental pillars, halls, and gardens. A place is to be constructed for the Vice-Chancellor. Everything has been done on such a luxurious scale that the houses meant for labourers have been found to be good enough for clerks.

Moreover the present government have totally failed to realise that this freedom was not won for them and a few others to enter into an orgy of enjoyment in the form of receptions, banquets, dinners, dances, birthday parties, garlands and pandals whilst 90% of the people are grinding in abject poverty. Extravagant parties, either given by Ministers or at which Ministers and other high government officials are present, are legion. More communists have been created by this vulgar display than by the much maligned capitalist.

On the other hand the communists and other leftist parties have absolutely failed to create an effective opposition in parliament owing to their personal and ideological differences. The ideology of these parties are [*sic*] totally unsuited to this country. It is anti-religious and undemocratic. The success of Marxism must necessarily result in the creation of a police state, which is the negation of personal and political freedom.

Under these circumstances the intelligent voter of the country is placed upon the horns of a dilemma. A large number of votes are given to any particular party not

because the voters approve the policy of it but because they dislike the other party more. This situation also leads to the unfortunate position that a very large number of people never vote at all because the two parties are equally unsatisfactory. Clear signs of this state of affairs were shown at the last local government elections when a very large number of independents were returned.

Such a position is most unsatisfactory and the duty of this Congress is crystal clear. This Congress is the oldest political organisation of the country having sprung from the Reform League in 1917. It has had its various vicissitudes but it always placed the interests of the country before that of factions or of persons. There have been always persons in this Congress who having failed to gain their own ends had left it. Unlike their prototype of old the people who left Congress recently have attempted to synchronise their departure with the demise of this great national institution. But undaunted by such events this Congress fought for the freedom of the country in fair and in foul weather. I say without fear of contradiction that it was this Congress that kept the banner of freedom flying and it is this Congress that has been responsible for whatever degree of independence we have gained. But our inactivity of the last three years, which I referred to at the very outset of this speech, has enabled certain quarters not only to minimise the value of the work that patriots of this country have done to win our independence but also to do the country irreparable harm.

In his book on "The Ceylon Constitution" Sir Ivor Jennings says in the concluding paragraph to the preface "I am indebted to the Prime Minister not only for the permission to state the above facts but also for the patience with which he bore the lectures of a constitutional lawyer for nearly five years. Some day I hope to explain in print how much Ceylon owes to Mr. Senanayake and to Sir Oliver Goonetilleke. But for them Ceylon would be a Colony."

Anything so untrue and absurd could not have been written. I take it that Rt-Hon. D. S. Senanayake read this preface before he agreed to the contents of it. If so he has been a party to an insult to the people and patriots of this country who have been fighting for the liberation of this country, before and after the Ceylon National Congress came into being. In what place in the world has two men by their individual efforts won the freedom of a country ! The independence of this ancient country was won not by Rt-Hon. D. S. Senanayake, but because of the work the great patriots of this country and the Congress did. How could a person who left Congress when we changed the objectives of Congress from dominion status to freedom win for this country its independence ? This independence was won by the people of this country by their determination to be free. The foundation was laid by such bold and noble patriots like Migettewatte Gunananda and Anagarika Dharmapala. Although their activities took a religious turn yet it was they who kept the flame of freedom burning. when colonial power was at its zenith these men preached to the country not to be afraid of a foreign government and taught the people to fight for their rights.

It was on the work of these patriots, that the men that Congress produced, carried on the struggle. This country has produced a number of patriots of whom any country could be proud. Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, James Peiris, H. J. C. Pereira, D. B. Jayatilaka, C. E. Corea, Francis de Zoysa, W. A. de Silva, E. T. de Silva, E. J. Samerawickrame, a host of others too numerous to mention. Except for Sir Ponnambalam Ramanathan the rest have been connected with Congress, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam being our revered founder. It is somewhat unfortunate that 5 years of lectures were necessary for Rt-Hon. D. S. Senanayake, yet I can assure Sir Ivor that we have and have had men in this Congress and there are still men in this Congress who could draft a constitution or express a view upon constitutional matters.

The interference of Rt.-Hon. D. S. Senanayake has really made Dominion Status given to us a conditional affair.

Prime Minister Atlee did not introduce the Independence Bill in parliament until Prime Minister D. S. Senanayake signed three agreements, only one of which may be regarded as necessary. There is no precedent in the Commonwealth for the External Affairs Agreement and Defence Agreement. Both these agreements have conditioned our freedom, and so long as they last we cannot, as a civilized country, act as we like in these matters. If we are getting undiluted Dominion Status how came it that these extraordinary agreements had to be signed before the Independence Bill was introduced.

As a matter of fact our independence was inevitable not only considering our ancient civilization and the temper of our people but also on account of world events.

With India and Pakistan free, Burma free, Indonesia on the verge of revolt, Ceylon must and inevitably become free. As a matter of fact Mr. L. S. Amery, one of our former Secretaries of State, has stated in an article published in the "Times of Ceylon" on the 4th instant that "It was inherent in the nature of that cause and of the growing tradition of our past that at the end of the war India and her neighbours in Burma and Ceylon should be invited to share in the full and equal independence of the older Dominions." Rt-Hon. D. S. Senanayake's interference not only unnecessarily limits our independence but has put this country into such a dangerous position that our very existence is in jeopardy.

We can only conclude that the signing of these agreements had been made a condition precedent to the granting of Dominion Status.

Neither in the case of Burma which became independent, nor in the case of India or Pakistan that became temporary dominions, was such a procedure followed. Had Prime Minister Senanayake before signing the agreements consulted the Congress or the country, the country would never have agreed to grant various military bases to Great Britain.

In the first place there was no need for us to enter upon Dominion Status conditionally. In the second place such bases would have made our so called freedom a sham. In the third place this agreement is not in the best interests of the country as it makes it a legitimate object of attack in any, future war to which Great Britain will be a party, and further there is no possibility of our remaining neutral in any future war because it commits us to a particular group in advance. Fifthly Great Britain is so weak today that it will never be able to protect us in any future war which must necessarily be one in which the atom bomb will play an important part, and sixthly there is no earthly reason why we should commit ourselves in advance to any particular party in any European War. It must be noted in this connection that the position of Great Britain has become more complicated by her membership in the Western Union. And seventhly there is absolutely no reason why we should be so much concerned over the defence of certain Commonwealth countries in which a Ceylonese can never settle down although Poles, Czechs, Yugoslavians and all manner of other white men are welcome. In the eighth place with Burma independent, India declaring herself a republic and Indonesia free it is illogical and unnatural for us to remain an integral part of any international bloc. If we wish to survive after another international conflagration, which is really not a remote possibility, we must forthwith repudiate this agreement and leave no room in the minds of any nation as to our political independence. The great harm done to the nation must be undone.

National freedom is nothing but a farce and a fraud if it does not give us an opportunity to go back to our own way of life that has been destroyed by a foreign government. There are two matters to which I would like to draw your particular attention. During the entirety of the foreign occupation of this country the non-English speaking section of the people were in the position of foreigners in their own land. So long as the official language of the country remains English this state of affairs will continue. As early as 1946

it was decided that Sinhalese and Tamil should take the place of English in ten years time. Except for the fact that a few swabasha clerks have received employment nothing has been done in order to carry out that decision. But now after three years we learn that a memorandum has been submitted to the cabinet by the Minister of Finance stating that English should continue to be the official language side by side with Sinhalese and Tamil until such time that our languages are fit to be used as the official language. This is merely an attempt to shelve this question. So long as English continues as the official language the vast majority of people of this country will be foreigners in their own land. There will be no opportunity for them in the public services other than that of a peon or a clerk. If the people of the country have a little respect, the verdict at the next general election will not be in doubt.

The other matter I wish to refer to is the excise policy of the government. According to the Prime Minister government will supply arrack so long as there is a demand for it. Already the government has established a state distillery and a co-operative society has also been given the right to distil. If there was one matter that greatly agitated the country even more than the freedom issue was the excise policy of government. It is abhorrent to the religious teachings of Buddhism, Hinduism and Mohamedism [*sic*] the religions of the vast majority of the people of the country. As a matter of fact most of our present leaders, including the Prime Minister, gained popularity as temperance workers. That the government should follow such a policy in the teeth of public opinion shows not only an utter contempt for the public but also a total lack of morality in its activities. The most important reason for this attitude of government is the loss of revenue amounting to Rs. 45 millions.

The gradual elimination of liquor will be a profit to the country by the savings it will result upon the expenditure on the police, courts, prisons and hospitals. The revenue derived from liquor is merely illusory.

27—K 19798 (75/03)

. . .

Not only has this government failed to give the people c the country their elementary rights but has totally faile to reduce the cost of living. The main reasons [*sic*] fo this is the failure of the agricultural policy of the countr The Prime Minister has been, now succeeded by his son responsible for it during the last 18 years. He unlike an other Minister received every cent he wanted for hi departments. Yet the results are not worth mentioning. Th result is that the country is forced to send out enormou sums of money annually for the purchase of foodstuff thereby restricting the imports of all other requirement and creating an artificial scarcity.

There is very grave doubt whether all the colossal amoun of money spent on Gal Oya will relieve the position wit regard to rice. It is said that the scheme will bring unde cultivation one hundred thousand acres. It is stated there i already 900,000 acres under paddy cultivation. This acreag is said to give one third of the requirements of the country If that be the case the addition of another hundred thousan is not going to make any material change.

This failure of the government to increase the food suppl is unpardonable in view of the tension in the internationa situation. Right throughout the last war we lived from "ship to mouth" and the position is not far different today. In any war our position will be worse. As I pointed ou earlier the agreements with Great Britain has [*sic*] made us a legitimate object of attack and the first thing an enemy would do is to cut off our communications. Then we shall have to thank the present government and die at leisure. The present government is a collosal [*sic*] failure as far as essential things are concerned.

The duty of the Congress, as I said before, is crystal clear. It must rise to the occasion. It must do its duty by the country. Owing to the attitude of the present parliamentary party, whose activities I analysed before, the Congress must begin with the political education of the masses. This is all the more necessary because of the nature of the opposition.

In a bitter attack against the government, Mr. de Silva *made a specific reference to Mr. D. S. Senanayake*, Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam and Sir John Kotelawala.

Mr. de Silva said that when the question of the acceptance of the Soulbury constitution was under discussion they decided to accept it as it was certainly a marked step forward in their struggle for freedom. They did more. They also decided to suspend their political activities in order to enable the country to present a united front and permitted their members to come forward on the election ticket of the U.N.P. which they were told would be in a position to bring unity between various communities.

Warring Factions in U.N.P.

"But such hope is entirely falsified. That organisation consists today of a number of warring factions whose personal interests are not reconcilable.

We find the leader of the Labour Party in the cabinet, but outside we find U.N.P. candidates contesting Labour candidates both in central and local Government elections. We find men totally unacceptable to the vast majority of voters in the country holding ministerial posts. Mr. G. G. Ponnambalam is one such case.

Mr. Ponnambalam more than any other person has been responsible for the creation of a bitterness of communal feeling never before witnessed in this country. He, more than any other, attempted to set back the clock of political progress of the country. He wanted, by representations both before the Soulbury commission and the Secretary of State, to impose his fifty-fifty theory of representation.

The result of the bitterness thus created by him is still potent. We find his camp followers sincerely adhering to his creed and now demanding the division of the country under the guise of federation. This man has been now taken to the bosom of the Prime Minister without assurances, without

explanations, without recantations. A government that has the least respect for public opinion would have given some form of explanation to the country."

Lure of Office

Mr. de Silva further stated: "In short the present government is a collection of a heterogeneous number of people held together by the lure of office and not by any ideal or party discipline. Such a state of affairs has made it absolutely necessary for the present government to have recourse to all manner of political devices which, to put it mildly, are not conducive to the development of a healthy democratic government. The first essential for such a government is a large number of offices for distribution."

Mr. de Silva referred to the creation of 13 Ministries, Parliamentary Secretaries, etc. Continuing, Mr. de Silva said that they found men of very doubtful reputation holding very high office. Men who had admitted to having bribed public servants, knowing that it was a criminal act to do so, were in the Senate. Men who were accountable to government in the conduct of public services were in the inner councils of the U.N.P. rubbing shoulders, nay, dictating, to Ministers. The only qualification for admittance to U.N.P. favour was money.

Food Situation

"The failure of the government to increase the food supply is unpardonable in view of the tension in the international situation. Right throughout the last war we lived from 'ship to mouth' and the position is not far different today. In any future war our position will be worse.

The agreement with Great Britain has made us a legitimate object of attack and the first thing an enemy would do is to cut off our communications. Then we shall have to thank the present government and die at leisure." "The present government is a colossal failure as far as essential things are concerned," added Mr. de Silva.

Black Record

Dr. W. L. Vitharana, Chairman of the Reception Committee, in welcoming the delegates, said that it might be argued that within the short period of two years the present government could not have brought about all the necessary changes and introduced all the necessary reforms for the amelioration of the masses.

For the last nineteen years the government of the country had been in the hands of those who are now governing them but there had been hardly any improvement in the condition of the people. "If we are to enjoy our newly won freedom there must be eternal vigilance on the part of the electorate. It would appear that the task of winning freedom is easier than making full use of it," added Dr. Vitharana.

No Portrait of Premier

The proceedings began with a procession of delegates from Mahatma Gandhi College to Phoenix Tea Garden, carrying national flags and portraits of National leaders. Conspicuous by its absence was that of the premier, the Rt. Hon'ble D. S. Senanayake.

The largest of them all was that of Mr. George E. de Silva, which occupied pride of place in the sessions hall, and flanking it were those of Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, Sir James Peiris and Sir Don Baron Jayatilaka on one side of those of Messrs. F. R. Senanayake, C. E. Corea and H. J. C. Pereira on the other.

Frock Coats and Top Hats

Mr. P. de S. Kularatne moved the following resolution:

> That inasmuch as our present position in the Commonwealth is liable to be misunderstood in international affairs and as it is not in the best interests of the country to leave our status in dispute, the Congress is of opinion that this country should declare itself a Republic.

He said that though Ceylon now enjoyed conditional freedom politically, the government had not as yet emancipated itself from certain modes of thinking. It thought in terms of pounds sterling instead of the Ceylon rupee and continued to pay colossal amounts as emoluments to its public servants, from the Governor-General downwards, but not including the lower strata of its servants such as clerks, etc. Another sign of the thraldom to a foreign mentality was that while, for instance, Indian leaders donned khaddar, ours still wore frock coats and top hats.

Mr. P. P. Siriwardena said that the resolution was not sponsored in imitation of India but actually had been discussed as far back as 1946. He said that so long as the words "His Majesty's Service" occupied the place they do, people in Ceylon would not feel they were really free.

After several other delegates spoke, the resolution was carried unanimously.

Condition of Freedom

The next resolution placed before the sessions was as follows:

> Inasmuch as the present agreement with Great Britain granting military, naval and air bases, was entered into without the proper approval of the country and inasmuch as the agreement was inimical to its best interests and as a matter of fact put into jeopardy our very existence by committing this country to an international bloc, this Congress is firmly of opinion that this agreement should be forthwith terminated.

Moving the resolution, Mr. P. Rajapakse said that people should thank the Congress for having dragged the matter into the light of day, the government having kept the people in the dark about it. From what he had understood, the agreement had been entered by Mr. D. S. Senanayake and Sir Oliver Goonetilleke on their own as a condition of the grant of independence.

Mr. Gilbert Perera (*Hony. Joint Secretary*), seconding the resolution, said that it did not seem that the government which succeeded the British rulers had much regard for the safety or the welfare of the people of Ceylon to have committed the Country in this manner. There was no other explanation for Mr. Senanayake's "sacrifice" of the people and of generations unborn for the sake of dominion status. How free the country really was could be gauged by the fact, he said, that no fishing boat could enter Trincomalee harbour.

The resolution was carried unanimously after further discussion.

At 6.30 p.m. it was announced that the President (Mr. George E. de Silva) had received notice from the police that its permit for the use of loudspeakers expired at the time, and the rest of the proceedings were carried on without the aid of the "mike."

Second Days' Proceedings

Excise Policy Criticised

At the second day's session Mr. de Silva condemned the excise policy of the government which was more conducive to increase rather than decrease the consumption of liquor. He said that the closure of taverns through local option polls alone was not going to help to eliminate liquor altogether.

Mr. P. P. Siriwardena, supporting the resolution on the subject, criticised the habit of Ministers of state in encouraging the liquor habit. He referred to the proposed cocktail party of Mr. S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike to members of the Commonwealth conference.

A resolution was unanimously passed calling for immediate action to mitigate the drink evil and proposing that women should also have a right to exercise their vote at local option polls.

Educational System

Another resolution was passed denouncing the present educational policy of the government and demanding its immediate revision.

Before the sessions concluded at noon the Congress adopted in all 13 resolutions.

Mr. Albert Perera said that their leaders of today were preoccupied in importing court dancers of sultans and throwing flowers on them while the suffering masses were made to pay 30 cts. for a single coconut.

IV

THE CONSTITUTION OF THE NATIONAL CONGRESS AND ITS REVISIONS, 1920-1944

46. CONSTITUTION OF THE CEYLON NATIONAL CONGRESS: October 1920[1]

Articles as amended by the Congress on the 16th October, 1920

ARTICLE 1

Object of the Congress

THE aim of the *Ceylon National Congress* is to secure for the people of Ceylon responsible government and the status of a self-governing member of the British Empire. This end is to be achieved by constitutional methods by a reform of the existing system of government and administration, by a vigorous development of self-governing institutions, and by organising and fostering the intellectual, moral and economic resources of the country.

ARTICLE 2

Congress Delegates, Election of

The Congress shall consist of delegates elected annually by the various political associations in Ceylon which are recognised by the Executive Committee of the Congress as able to promote the objects of the Congress. The decision of the Executive Committee as to whether an association is entitled to recognition, or has become disentitled thereto, shall be final.

Their Qualifications

Provided that no person shall be entitled to be a delegate unless he: (*a*) has attained the age of 21 years; (*b*) has expressed in writing his acceptance of the objects of the Congress as laid down in Article 1 and his willingness to abide by its constitution and rules; and (*c*) pays a fee of Rs. 5 to the Secretary of the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE 3

Number of Delegates

The number of the delegates which each association may send to the Congress shall be determined each year by the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE 4

Ordinary Session of Congress

The Congress shall ordinarily meet each year in the month of December at such place and on such date as shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

Extraordinary Session

An extraordinary session of the Congress may be summoned by the Executive Committee wherever and whenever it may deem advisable to hold such session, provided that not less than 40 per cent of the Committee shall be present and vote for the holding of such session.

ARTICLE 5

Officers of the Congress

The Officers of the Congress shall consist of a President, a Vice-President, two Secretaries and Treasurer, who shall be elected annually by the Executive Committee at least 10 days before the date fixed for the holding of the Congress.

ARTICLE 6

Notification of Congress Meeting

The Executive Committee shall three months before the meeting of the Congress give public notification of the date and place of the meeting.

ARTICLE 7

Reception Committee

The Executive Committee shall take steps to form a Reception Committee for each Congress, with a Chairman and Secretaries.

ARTICLE 8

Notice of Resolutions

The Executive Committee shall invite the various political Associations to give notice in writing of any resolutions which they may wish to propose at the Congress. Such notice must reach the Secretary of the Executive Committee at least one month before the date fixed for the meeting of the Congress.

ARTICLE 9

Agenda of Congress

The Executive Committee shall decide which of the resolutions of which notice has been given shall be placed on the Congress Agenda, in addition to such resolutions as the Committee may of its own motion resolve to place thereon, and the order in which they shall be placed.

ARTICLE 10

Amendment of Resolutions

No amendment shall be permitted to be moved at the Congress, unless at least 24 hours' notice of it be given to the Secretary and at least one-third of the Committee present at a meeting called for the purpose of considering it vote for the inclusion of the amendment in the Agenda.

ARTICLE 11

Constitution of the Executive Committee

The Executive Committee shall consist of not less than twenty-four, and not more than sixty, members elected by the Congress, and shall hold office from the day of the meeting of the Congress at which it is elected till the conclusion of the sitting of the next Congress.

The Executive Committee shall elect its Chairman, Secretaries and Treasurer, and take all steps necessary to give effect to the resolutions of the Congress.

The quorum for a meeting of the Committee shall be seven.

ARTICLE 12

Framing of Rules

The Executive Committee shall have power to frame rules for the transaction of the business of the Congress, and to determine all matters not herein specially provided for.

47. CONSTITUTION OF THE CEYLON NATIONAL CONGRESS: Mid 1920's[1]

ARTICLE 1

Objects of the Congress

The aim of the Ceylon National Congress is to secure for the people of Ceylon responsible Government and the status of a self-governing member of the British Empire. This end is to be achieved by constitutional methods by a reform of the existing system of Government and Administration, by a vigorous development of self-governing institutions, and by organising and fostering the intellectual, moral, and economic resources of the country.

ARTICLE 2

Congress Delegates, Election of

The Congress shall consist of Delegates elected annually by the various political associations in Ceylon which are recognized by the Executive Committee of the Congress as able to promote the objects of the Congress. The decision of the Executive Committee as to whether an Association is entitled to recognition, or has become disentitled thereto, shall be final.

ARTICLE 3

Number of Delegates

The number of delegates which each association may send to the Congress shall be determined each year by the Executive Committee.

1. This is reprinted from *Handbook CNC*, 1928, App. pp. 162-65. No date is specified and I have not been able to discover exactly when this constitution was adopted.

ARTICLE 4

Ordinary Session of Congress

The Congress shall ordinarily meet each year in the month of December at such place and on such date as shall be determined by the Executive Committee.

ARTICLE 5

Officers of the Congress

The Officers of the Congress shall consist of the President, a Vice-President, two Secretaries, and a Treasurer, who shall be elected annually by the Executive Committee at least 10 days before the date fixed for the holding of the Congress.

Any constituent Association may, two months before the date fixed for the Congress, suggest to the Executive Committee the names of persons who are in their opinion eligible for the Presidentship of the ensuing Congress. The Executive Committee shall send to the constituent Associations the full list of names suggested, and shall, at least 15 days before the date of sessions elect the President, and shall do so from among the persons suggested as aforesaid if any names have been suggested. The President shall be elected by ballot. If there are more than two nominations, the three who stand at the head of the poll shall be resubmitted for balloting and the two who are at the head of the resulting ballot shall then be finally balloted for.

ARTICLE 6

Notification of the Congress Meeting

The Executive Committee shall three months before the meeting of the Congress give public notification of the date and place of the meeting.

ARTICLE 7

Reception Committee

The Executive Committee shall take steps to form a Reception Committee for each Congress, with a Chairman and Secretaries.

ARTICLE 8

Notice of Resolutions

The Executive Committee shall invite the various Political Associations to give notice in writing of any resolutions which they may wish to propose at the Congress. Such notice must reach the secretaries of the Executive Committee at least one month before the date fixed for the meeting of the Congress.

ARTICLE 9

Agenda of Congress

The Executive Committee shall decide which of the resolutions of which notice has been given shall be placed on the Congress agenda, in addition to such resolutions as the Committee may of its own motion resolve to place thereon, and the order in which they shall be placed.

A copy of the Agenda shall be sent to the constituent Associations at least seven days prior to the sessions.

Provided, however, that the Committee shall always have the right to place on the Agenda any emergency resolutions.

ARTICLE 10

Amendment of Resolution

No amendment shall be permitted to be moved at the Congress, unless at least 24 hours notice of it be given to the Secretaries and at least one-third of the Executive Committee present at a meeting called for the purpose of considering it vote for the inclusion of the amendment in the Agenda.

Provided, however, that the Chairman may allow any amendment to be moved at any session with the leave of the Congress.

ARTICLE 11

The Executive Committee shall consist of the officers appointed under Article 5, and one member nominated by each Association and an additional member nominated by

each Association having a hundred or more active members on the roll and a further fifteen members to be elected by the Congress, and shall hold office from the day of the meeting of Congress at which it is elected till the conclusion of the sitting of next Congress. The Executive Committee shall take all steps necessary to give effect to the Resolutions of the Congress.

The quorum for a meeting of the Executive Committee shall be seven.

ARTICLE 12

Framing of Rules

The Executive Committee shall have power to frame rules for the transaction of the business of the Congress, and to determine all matters not herein specially provided for.

ARTICLE 13

Each member of the Executive Committee of the Ceylon National Congress shall remit to the Treasurer a monthly subscription of Rs. 2.50 in the case of outstation members and Rs. 5.00 in the case of members residing in Colombo payable in advance at the commencement of each month following the date of his election. Should a member fail to remit the said subscription for three consecutive months he shall at the end of the third month for which his subscription shall remain unpaid be deemed to have resigned and shall cease to be a member, and it shall be the duty of the Secretary to remove his name from the list of members of the Congress Executive Committee and request the association concerned to nominate another in his place provided that no association shall have the power to nominate a new member unless the subscription due has been paid up. In the case of Committee members directly appointed by the Congress, the Executive Committee shall elect new members in place of those whose names have been struck off the roll for non-payment of subscription.

ARTICLE 14

All past Presidents of the Ceylon National Congress shall be regarded as ex-officio members of the Congress Executive Committee in addition to the fifteen members elected by Congress under Article 11.

48. CONSTITUTION OF THE CEYLON NATIONAL CONGRESS: Adopted in December 1931[1]

ARTICLE 1

Objects

The aim of the Ceylon National Congress is to secure by constitutional methods[2] full responsible Government for the people of Ceylon.

ARTICLE 2

Constituent Parts

The Ceylon National Congress shall consist of: (*a*) The All-Ceylon Congress Committee; (*b*) District Congress Committees; and (*c*) Local Congress Associations.

ARTICLE 3

Membership

No person shall be entitled to be a member of the Ceylon National Congress unless he or she: (*a*) has attained the age of 18 years[3]; and (*b*) has taken the Congress pledge as defined in Article 14.

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1. This is derived from a printed pamphlet with the following words written in hand under the title: "(Adopted at the Annual Sessions held on the 18th and 19th December, 1931)." See C. N. A., 60/2. The pamphlet also has amendments written in ink at various places. The amended version is followed here. Footnotes are used to indicate these amendments.

2. The words " by constitutional methods " were additions.

3. The original printed version had an age limit of 21 years.

The All-Ceylon Congress Committee

ARTICLE 4

Constitution

(a) The All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall consist of:

(1) Members elected annually by each District Congress Committee from among its members. Each District Congress Committee shall elect 4 members to serve on the All-Ceylon Congress Committee. Notification of such election shall be made to the Hony. Secretaries of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee at least 2 weeks prior to the holding of the annual sessions of the Ceylon National Congress.

(2) All ex-Presidents of the Ceylon National Congress shall be ex-officio members, provided that they are members of a Local Congress Association.

(3) Congressmen elected to the State Council.

(4) Twelve members elected at the annual sessions of the Congress provided that they are members of a Local Congress Association.

(b) *Powers.*—The All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall have the power to carry out the programme of work as accepted in the resolutions adopted at the sessions of the Congress. It shall also deal with all matters that arise and for which no provision has been made in the rules.

(c) *Duties.*—The All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall make all such arrangements as are required by the Articles of the constitution for the holding of the annual sessions of the Congress.[1]

(d) *Quorum.*—The quorum for a meeting of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall be ten.

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1. The printed version had another sentence which has been deleted in red ink. It ran thus: "It shall prepare a programme of work for each year and take such steps as are necessary to give effect to the resolutions passed at the annual sessions of the Congress each year."

(e) *Rules for Transaction of Business.*—The All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall have the power to frame rules for the transaction of business of the Congress and to determine all matters not herein specially provided for.

District Congress Committees

ARTICLE 5

Constitution

There shall be a District Congress Committee in each State Council electoral area. A district for this purpose shall be a State Council electoral area.

(*a*) A District Congress Committee shall consist of members elected annually by each Local Congress Association within that area in the following manner: A Local Congress Association with a membership of 50 or less shall elect 1; and when membership is over 50 for every 50 or fraction of a 50 exceeding 25, such association shall elect 1.

(*b*) *Powers.*—District Congress Committee shall have power to deal with all matters affecting the District alone, provided that their actions are consistent with the Congress policy and the resolutions adopted at the Congress sessions. All matters of a wider scope and all matters where there is any dispute or doubt shall be submitted to the All-Ceylon Congress Committee whose decisions shall be binding on the District Congress Committee.

(c) *Annual Report.*—Each District Congress Committee shall submit to the All-Ceylon Congress Committee an annual report of the work done in the district not later than one month before the annual sessions of the Congress.

(*d*) *Duties.*—It shall be the duty of a District Congress Committee:

(1) To co-ordinate as far as possible the work of the Local Congress Associations within its jurisdiction;

(2) To see that the registers of members of Local Congress Associations are annually revised;

(3) To submit to the Secretaries of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee the names of delegates to the Congress sessions; and

(4) To take all necessary steps to give effect to resolutions of the Congress and decisions of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee within the District.

Local Congress Associations

ARTICLE 6

(*a*) There shall be Local Congress Associations within each State Council Electoral area.

Constitution.—The area for each Local Congress Association shall be such a unit as will permit the Association keeping in touch with as many individuals as possible within that area.

(b) *Membership.*—Every man or woman over 21 years of age and taking the Congress Pledge shall be entitled to be a member of a Local Congress Association.

(c) *Powers.*—

(1) A Local Congress Association shall have power to give effect within its area to the Congress policy and the decisions of the District Committee. All matters of a wider scope shall be dealt with by the District Congress Committee or the All-Ceylon Congress Committee.

(2) It shall have power to frame rules for the appointment of an Executive Committee and office-bearers for the conduct of business.

(3) It shall keep proper minutes of meetings and registers of members which shall be open to the inspection of the District Congress Committee or the All-Ceylon Congress Committee.

(4) A report of the work done by each Local Congress Association shall be submitted each year to the District Congress Committee.

Delegates to Congress Sessions

ARTICLE 7

Delegates to the Congress sessions shall consist of:

(1) All members of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee;

(2) All members of District Congress Committees; and

(3) A number not exceeding 100[1] for the area of each District Congress Committee to be chosen by each District Congress Committee from members of the Local Congress Associations within its area.

Sessions of the Congress

ARTICLE 8

(a) *The Annual Sessions* of the Congress shall ordinarily be held each year in the month of December at such place and on such date as shall be determined by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee.

(b) *Extraordinary Sessions.*—Extraordinary sessions of the Congress may be summoned by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee wherever it may deem advisable to hold such sessions provided that not less than 25 per cent of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee approve thereof in writing. The District Congress Committees shall be given not less than one week's notice of such sessions.

(c) *Notification of Sessions.*—The All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall two months before the annual sessions of the Congress give notification of the date and place of the meeting to the District Congress Committee.

(d) *Reception Committee.*—The All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall take steps to form a Reception Committee for each annual sessions of the Congress with a Chairman and Secretaries.

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1. The printed version had 50 instead of 100.

(e) *Notice of Resolutions.*—The District Congress Committees shall give notice in writing of any resolutions which they may wish to propose at the annual sessions of the Congress. The District Congress Committees shall consult the Local Congress Associations before submitting such resolutions. Such notice must be received by the Secretaries of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee at least one month before the date fixed for the meeting of the Congress.

(f) *Agenda of Congress.*—The All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall decide which of the resolutions of which notice has been given shall be placed on the Congress Agenda, in addition to such resolutions as the Committee may of its own motion resolve to place thereon, and the order in which they shall be placed. Copies of the agenda shall be sent to the District Congress Committees at least 7 days prior to the sessions. The District Congress Committee shall supply the Local Congress Associations in their respective districts with copies of the agenda. Provided, however, that the All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall always have the right of placing on the agenda any emergency resolution.

(g) *Amendment of Resolutions.*—No amendment shall be permitted to be moved at the sessions of the Congress unless at least 24 hours' notice of it be given to the Secretaries and at least one-third of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee present at a meeting called for the purpose of considering it vote for the inclusion of the amendment in the Agenda.

Officers of the Congress

ARTICLE 9

The Officers of the Congress shall consist of a President, a Vice-President, two Secretaries and a Treasurer (who may be one of the Secretaries) to be elected annually by the

All-Ceylon Congress Committee at least 15 days before the date fixed for the holding of the annual sessions of the Congress.

The District Congress Committees shall, one month before the date fixed for the annual sessions of the Congress, submit to the All-Ceylon Congress Committee the names of persons who are in their opinion eligible for the Presidentship of the ensuing year.

The All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall send to the District Congress Committees the full list of names suggested, and shall, at least 15 days before the date of the annual sessions of the Congress, elect the President and shall do so from among the persons suggested as aforesaid, if any names have been suggested.

The President shall be elected by ballot. If there are more than two nominations, the three who stand at the head of the poll shall be resubmitted for balloting and the two who are at the head of the resulting ballot shall then be finally balloted for.

The President of the Congress shall be the Chairman of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee for the year following.

Finance

ARTICLE 10

(1) Each District Congress Committee shall annually contribute to the funds of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee a sum calculated at the rate of 10 cents per head of all the members of Local Congress Associations within its area.

(2) Delegates to sessions shall pay one rupee per head.

Congress State Council Party

ARTICLE 11[1]

(*a*) All members of the Congress who are elected to the State Council shall work together as a party.

(*b*) *Election of Leader and Whip.*—The All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall elect from those of the Congress members in the State Council a Leader and a Whip.

(*c*) *Party Leader.*—The Leader shall act as Leader of the Congress State Council Party for all purposes within the State Council and shall preside at meetings of the party.

(*d*) *Party Whip.*—The Whip shall act as Secretary of the Party and shall generally perform the functions of a party Whip within the Council.

(*e*) *Powers of Party.*—

(1) The party shall meet and decide upon: (*a*) the policy to be followed by the party in giving effect to the Congress decisions and resolutions; (*b*) the action to be taken by the party in any important matter coming up for discussion before the Council and generally any other business connected with work within the Council.

All-Ceylon Congress Committee may be summoned by Party Leader or on Requisition.

(2) Whenever the Leader feels it necessary in any matter of great importance or on a requisition signed by 10 members of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee[2] regarding a matter of importance, a meeting of the All-Ceylon Congress

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1. Article 11 had one subsection, denoted (*b*) and entitled "Party Committee," which was crossed-out and entirely omitted. It read as follows: "A Committee of seven of whom 5 shall consist of members of the State Council and 2 members of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee who are not members of Council shall be elected by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee as the Executive Committee of the Party." Elsewhere in Article 11 the words "Party Committee" have been consistently altered to "Party" by crossing out the latter word.

2. The printed version reads as follows: "......signed by 5 Congress members of the State Council and 5 members of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee who are not members of the State Council regarding......"

Committee shall be called to discuss such matter. Any decision arrived at by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee in such a matter shall be adhered to by all the Congress Members of the State Council,[1] provided that at least 25 per cent of the members of All-Ceylon Congress Committee are present and at least two-thirds of those present should support such decision.

Censure and Expulsion

ARTICLE 12

Any Congress member or Congress Councillor who has acted contrary to the Congress Policy or to the decisions of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee or of the Congress Party may be censured or expelled or otherwise dealt with by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee, provided not less than 25 per cent[2] of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee are present and two-thirds of the number present shall support such action. Not less than one week's notice of such meeting shall be given the member concerned who shall be given an opportunity of explaining his action complained of.

ARTICLE 13

Nomination Committee

The All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall appoint a sub-Committee of seven members to be called the Nomination Committee, who shall recommend to the All-Ceylon Congress Committee members to be nominated as Congress candidates to stand for election to the various seats in the State Council. In doing so, the Nomination Committee shall as far as is feasible act in consultation with the District Congress Committees and the wishes of would be candidates. The recommendations of the Nomination Committee shall be placed before the All-Ceylon Congress Committee. Any such recommendation shall not

1. The rest of this sub-section was an addition.
2. The original version had the figure as 60 per cent.

be changed unless there are present not less than 60 per cent of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee and 2/3 of those present shall support such change.

The Congress Pledge

ARTICLE 14

The Congress Pledge shall be in the following form:—

I, ... of ...... , do hereby pledge myself to abide loyally by the constitution of the Ceylon National Congress and all decisions arrived at thereunder.

(Signature) . . . .

(Date) . . ..

R. S. S. Gunewardene,
A. W. H. Abeysundere,
Joint Hony. Secretaries,
Ceylon National Congress.

49. CONSTITUTION OF THE CEYLON NATIONAL CONGRESS: November 1936[1]

Proposed constitution of the Ceylon National Congress adopted at a meeting of the Executive Committee of the Ceylon National Congress held on the 27th November, 1936.

ARTICLE 1

Object

The aim of the Ceylon National Congress is:[2] (a) To secure for the people of Ceylon responsible government and the status of a self-governing member of the British Empire by a reform of the existing system of government

1. C N. A. 60/3. This pamphlet was printed at The Ceylon Stationers Ltd., Colombo.

2. A significant feature of the pamphlet is the use of the phrase "Ceylon National Congress Party." But second thoughts seem to have prevailed and the word "Party" has been consistently (with some omissions) crossed out or, where it stood alone, been replaced by the word "Congress."

and administration. (*b*) To press for a vigorous development of self-governing institutions in Ceylon and to organise and foster the intellectual, moral and economic resources of Ceylon.

ARTICLE 2

(*a*) The Ceylon National Congress shall consist of: (1) Primary members; (2) Mahajana Sabhas and other political associations directly affiliated to the Congress.

ARTICLE 3

Membership

(*a*) Any person over the age of 18 years who believes in Article 1 and who subscribes to the policy of the Congress as adopted by the special sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held in September 1935, until such policy is changed by a subsequent sessions of the Congress, shall on making a written declaration to that effect and presenting an application in Form A annexed hereto with an entrance fee of Re. 1 shall become a primary member of the Congress.

(*b*) The applicant on being enrolled shall receive a certificate of Membership as per Form B annexed hereto.

ARTICLE 4

Mahajana Sabhas and Political Associations

(*a*) Mahajana Sabhas and political associations seeking affiliation with the Congress shall present an application form under form C with an affilation fee of Re. 1 and shall make a declaration that they subscribe to Article 1 and the existing policy of the Congress Party.

(*b*) The decision of the Executive Committee of the Congress as to whether an association is entitled to recognition or has become disentitled thereto shall be final. The Honey. Secretaries shall issue a certificate of membership in Form D to the association thus affiliated. When applying for affiliation, the association shall along with the application,

send to the Hony. Secretaries a full list of the names and addresses of the office bearers and members of such association.

(c) Any primary member of the Congress or any affiliated association shall have the right to report to the Executive Committee the conduct of any member or affiliated association of the Congress who or which acts contrary to Article 1 or the existing Policy of the Congress, and the decision of the Executive Committee on such complaint shall be final. The Executive Committee shall have the power to disenrol such member or to disaffiliate such association or to adopt any other disciplinary measures against such member or association after due inquiry. The Executive Committee may also on its own initiative act against such member or association.

(d) The annual sessions of the Congress shall consist of primary members and of delegates elected by the associations affiliated to the Party.

(e) The Congress shall ordinarily hold the annual sessions in the month of December at such place and on such date as shall be determined by the Executive Committee. An extraordinary sessions of the Congress may be summoned by the Executive Committee wherever and whenever it may deem advisable to hold such sessions provided that not less than 25 per cent of the Committee shall be present and vote for the holding of such sessions.

ARTICLE 5

Office-bearers

(1) The Officers of the Congress shall consist of a President, Vice-President, two Secretaries and a Treasurer who shall be elected annually by the Executive Committee at least a month before the date fixed for the holding of the annual sessions of the Congress.

(2) An office-bearer shall be eligible for re-election, but no office-bearer shall hold the same office for three consecutive years.

(3) Any constituent association may two months before the date fixed for the annual sessions suggest to the Executive Committee the names of persons who are in their opinion eligible for the Presidentship of the Congress for the ensuing year.

(4) The Executive Committee shall be elected at the annual sessions of the Congress and shall consist of not less than 25 primary members exclusive of the members nominated by the affiliated associations.

(5) Each affiliated association shall one month before the annual sessions send to the Secretaries of the Congress the names and addresses of the members nominated by such associations to the Executive Committee and as delegates to the annual sessions. Associations having over 100 members shall have the right to nominate two members and all other associations one member to the Executive Committee, and 10 delegates and 5 delegates respectively to the annual sessions.

The Executive shall hold office from the day of the sessions of the Congress at which it is elected till the conclusion of the sitting of the next sessions and shall conduct the business of the Congress from the day of its election until the new Committee is elected.

(6) The Executive Committee shall two months before the annual sessions of the Congress give public notification of the date and place of the sessions.

(7) The Executive Committee shall take steps to form a Reception Committee for each sessions of the Congress with a Chairman and Secretaries.

(8) Every member of the Executive Committee shall pay a monthly subscription of Re. 1. Any member of the Committee whose subscription is over three months in arrears shall lose his membership in the Executive Committee as well as his right to vote at the annual sessions of the Party.

ARTICLE 6

Agenda of the Annual Sessions

(1) Any primary member of the Congress or any constituent associations shall have the right to give notice in writing of any resolutions which they may wish to propose at the annual sessions. Such notice must reach the Secretaries of the Party at least one month before the date fixed for the sessions.

(2) The Executive Committee shall decide which of the resolutions of which notice has been given shall be placed on the agenda of the annual sessions or of an extraordinary sessions, in addition to such resolutions as the Committee may of its own motion resolve to place thereon, and the order in which they shall be placed.

(3) A copy of the agenda shall be sent to the constituent associations at least 7 days prior to the sessions provided that the Committee shall always have the right to place on the agenda any emergency resolutions.

(4) No amendment shall be permitted to be moved at the annual sessions or any other sessions of the Congress, unless at least 24 hours notice of it be given to the Secretaries, and at least one-third of the Executive Committee present at a meeting of the Committee convened for the purpose of considering such amendment vote for the inclusion of the amendment in the agenda, provided however that the chairman may allow any amendment to be moved at any sessions with the leave of a majority of the members of such sessions.

(5) The quorum for a meeting of the Executive Committee shall be seven, and of an annual or special sessions shall be 50.

ARTICLE 7

State Council Elections

(1) The Executive Committee shall appoint a Nominations Board of not less than five persons from

amongst its members who shall nominate Congress candidates for any general election or by-election of the State Council.

(2) Before making such nominations, the Nominations Board, through the Secretaries of the Congress, may consult the constituent associations in the various electorates. The decision of the Nominations Board shall be final, and such decision shall be conveyed to the constituent associations and the nominees of the Board through the Secretaries of the Executive Committee as soon as such decision is taken.

(3) Any member of the Congress standing for election against the decision of the Nominations Board or who supports an opposing candidate or actively works against the Congress candidate shall on a complaint being made to the Executive Committee by a member or constituent association or on its own initiative disenrol [*sic*] or take any other suitable disciplinary measures against such member, after the inquiry. The same procedure shall be adopted in the case of a constituent association which acts against the decision of the Nominations Board.

(4) It shall be the duty of the Executive Committee to render every assistance to the nominee of the Congress in organising his election campaign and whenever necessary the Executive Committee shall have the power to make grants from the Party Fund to meet the election expenses of such candidate.

ARTICLE 8

Congress Party in the State Council

(1) As soon as may be after a general election and before the first meeting of the new State Council, the candidates of the Congress Party who have been elected shall elect a Party Leader and a Party Whip.

(2) The Congress Party in the State Council shall also nominate candidates for the Speakers, Deputy Speakers,

Deputy Chairman of Committees and the Minist[illegible] so organise themselves to have a *majority in* Executive Committee of the State Council.

(3) Once the Congress Party has nominated ca[illegible] for the various offices in the State Council, no C[illegible] candidate shall put himself forward for election as *the nominee of the Party for a particular office.*

(4) The Party Leader may call a meeting of the C[illegible] Party in the State Council, when he so desires, and be the duty of the Party members to abide by the [illegible] *of such meetings of the Party, and vote accordingl*[illegible] *State Council.*

(5) Any Congress member who puts himself forw[illegible] election for a particular office in the State Council the decision of the Party or who votes against the [illegible] of the Party on any matter before the State Coun[illegible] be reported by the Party Leader to the Ex[illegible] Committee of the Congress Party for suitable disci[illegible] action to be taken against him. The decision of the Ex[illegible] Committee shall be final on any such matter.

(6) The Party Whip shall act as Secretary [illegible] Congress Party in the State Council, and shall [illegible] written record of the meetings of the Party.

ARTICLE 9

Party

(1) There shall be a Party Fund of the Congress to be controlled by the Executive Committee.

(2) Funds of the Party shall be raised by the Ex[illegible] Committee, by seeking donations from members, [illegible] any other method considered suitable by the Ex[illegible] Committee.

(3) The Treasurer shall submit a statement of a[illegible] duly audited to each annual sessions of the Party.

FORM A

Application Form

To the Joint Hony. Secretaries,
Ceylon National Congress Party.

I hereby declare that I believe in article 1 of the rules of the Ceylon National Congress Party and the policy of the Party as adopted by the special sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held in September 1935, until such policy is changed by any subsequent sessions of the Congress Party.

I further declare that I am over 18 year of age and that I desire to become a member of the Congress Party, and I enclose my entrance fee Re. 1.

Full name ....

Postal address ....

Age .... Sex .... Occupation ....

Dated ....

Signature of applicant.

FORM B

Certified that .... is duly enrolled a member of the Ceylon National Congress Party and bears Register No. .... in the Congress Register of primary members.

Dated ....

....
Joint Hony. Secretaries,
Ceylon National Congress Party.

FORM C

To the Joint Hony. Secretaries,
Ceylon National Congress Party.

.... (*Name of Political Association*) hereby declares that the association believes in Article 1 of the rules of the Ceylon National Congress Party and the policy of the Congress Party as adopted by the special sessions of the Ceylon National Congress in September 1935 until such policy is changed by a subsequent sessions of the Congress Party.

The association further declares that it desires to become affiliated to the Ceylon National Congress Party and encloses its affiliation fee of Re. 1.

Name of Association ....

Postal address of office of the association ....

No. of members ....

Electoral District of the State Council ....

Dated ....

..................................,
Signature of the Secretary of the association.

FORM D

Certificate of Affiliation of Political Association

Certified that .... (state name of association) is duly affiliated to the Ceylon National Congress Party and bears Register No. .... in the Congress Register of Political Associations affiliated to the Party.

Dated ....

....
Joint Hony. Secretaries,
Ceylon National Congress Party.

50. INITIAL DRAFT OF THE 1940 CONSTITUTION OF THE CEYLON NATIONAL CONGRESS PARTY[1]

ARTICLE 1

Objects

The object of the Ceylon National Congress Party is: (*a*) The attainment by the people of Ceylon of dominion status with control of finance, control of defence, and the right to secede. (*b*) The removal of the exploitation of the masses as outlined in the policy and programme of the Congress Party adopted in December 1939.

ARTICLE 2

The Ceylon National Congress Party shall consist of primary members duly elected under Article 3.

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1. From C.N.A., 60/143. This draft was printed and circulated with the following covering note addressed from the " Congress Office, Borella Flats."

27.2.40.

THE CEYLON NATIONAL CONGRESS

The Executive Committee will meet at the above office on the 8th March at 5 p.m. The chief business will be the consideration of the draft constitution, a copy of which is enclosed.

N.B.—There will also be an *emergency meeting of the Executive Committee* at the Congress Office on Friday, the 1st March at 5 p.m. to consider the constitutional crisis.

Dudley Senanayake,
J. R. Jayewardene,
Joint Hony Secretaries.

The constitution that o [illegible]
modification of the draft. [illegible]
great for the whole draft [illegible]
final version are clearly b[illegible]
National Congress, amendments being made wherever necessary. Included

ARTICLE 3

Membership[1]

(1) Any person over the age of 18 years who believes in Article [1] shall on making a written declaration to that effect and presenting an application in Form A annexed hereto, to the General Secretaries of the Congress Party or to the Congress Sabha within the district in which the applicant ordinarily resides shall become a primary member of the Congress Party. The minimum yearly subscription shall be 25 cents.

(2) The applicant on being enrolled shall receive a certificate of membership as per Form B annexed hereto.

(3) Every primary member who has not paid his yearly subscription within three months after he is enrolled as a member, or within three months of the beginning of each year, shall automatically cease to be a member.

(4) No primary member shall be entitled to exercise his rights of voting at any election unless he has been continuously on a Congress register for two months prior to the date of such election.

(5) The Working Committee shall have the power to dis-enroll any member or to adopt any other disciplinary measures against any member after due inquiry. Such decision must be placed before the All Ceylon Congress Committee for its approval.

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among the papers and documents of the Congress are : (i) a pamphlet entitled *Constitution of the Indian National Congress (As amended at the Haripura Congress)* which bears J. R. Jayewardene's signature dated 9th February, 1939 ; and (2) another pamphlet on the *Constitution of The Indian National Congress (As amended at the Bombay meeting of the A. I. C. C., June 1939).* See C.N.A., 60/316–317.

1. As in the instance of Article 2, Article 3 remained substantially the same in the Constitution eventually adopted in 1940, with the exception that an additional subsection 7 was included in the latter.

(6) No person who is a member of the Congress Party shall be a member of an organisation which advocates the representation of communal or special interests in the legislature, or whose objects or programme involves political activities which are in the opinion of the Working Committee in conflict with those of the Congress.

ARTICLE 4

The Structure of the Congress

(1) There shall be Congress Committees in:

(a) Village Committee areas, called Jatika Gan Sabhas[1];

(b) U. D. C. Areas, called Jatika Nagarika Sabhas;

(c) Municipal Ward areas called Jatika Nagarika Sabhas;

elected by the primary members in those areas. Members elected to these sabhas shall be called delegates.

(2) There shall be Congress Committees in State Council Electoral areas called Jatika Asana Sabhas elected by the members of the sabhas mentioned in Article 5 (1) within those areas.

(3) There shall be an All-Ceylon Congress Committee elected by the State Council Electoral Committees, and called the Lanka Jatika Sabha.

(4) There shall be a Working Committee of the Congress chosen by the President for the year from among the members of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee.

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1. Gan = village; Nagarika = town or city; Sabha = association; Jatika = National; Asana = seat.

(4) This sabha shall carry out the programme of work laid down by the Congress from sessions to sessions and deal with all new matters that may arise during its term of office.

(5) This sabha shall have the power to frame rules, not inconsistent with this constitution, and of regulating all matters connected with the Congress.

(6) This Sabha shall meet as often as required by the Working Committee or on a joint requisition addressed to the Working Committee by not less than 24 delegates of the sabha. Such requisition shall specify the purpose for which the requisitionists desire a meeting of this sabha. At such meetings additional items of business may be brought up for consideration, provided due notice thereof has been given to the member [*sic*].

(7) One-fifth of the total number of delegates shall form the quorum.

(8) This sabha shall hold office till the meeting of the New Lanka Jatika Sabha.

(9) Every delegate to the Lanka Jatika Sabha, ex-officio or elected, shall pay a monthly subscription of Re. 1 payable on or before the 10th of each month, delegates in default will not be permitted to take part in any meeting of this sabha, the Subjects Committee or in any sessions.

(10) Any delegate of the L. J. S. who has failed to attend 3 consecutive meetings of the Committee without excuse shall automatically cease to be a delegate of this Committee.

ARTICLE 8

Working Committee

(1) The Working Committee shall consist of the President of the Congress, and twelve members appointed by the President from amongst the delegates of the Lanka Jatika Sabha. The Joint Secretaries and the Treasurer shall be elected by the Working Committee from among its members.

(2) The Working Committee shall be the Executive authority and as such shall have the power to carry into effect the policy and programme laid down by the Lanka Jatika Sabha and the Congress, and shall remain responsible *thereto*.

The Working Committee shall place before every meeting of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee the reports of its proceedings and the agenda of the meeting and shall assign at least one clear day for resolutions of which due notice may have been given by the members of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee other than those of the Working Committee, in accordance with the rules prescribed in that behalf.

(3) The Working Committee shall have the power:

(i) To frame rules and issue instructions for the proper working of the constitution and in all matters not otherwise provided for.

(ii) To superintend, direct and control all Congress Sabhas.

(iii) To take such disciplinary action as it may deem fit against a committee or individual for misconduct, wilful neglect or default, in addition to powers under Article 3 (5).

ARTICLE 9

Election of Delegates

(1) The Working Committee shall fix the date by which the election of delegates must be held to each Congress Sabha.

(2) Every delegate to the Lanka Jatika Sabha shall pay a fee of Rs. 5 on receipt of which he shall receive a certificate in accordance with Form. .... [1], duly signed by one of the General Secretaries of the Congress Party. No delegate who has not paid the fee shall be entitled to exercise any of his functions.

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1. A space has been left here.

ARTICLE 10

Sessions

(1) The annual sessions of the Congress shall be held at the time and place decided upon at the preceding sessions. The Lanka Jatika Sabha or the Working Committee may however for sufficient reason change either the venue or the date, or both, of the sessions.

(2) The annual sessions shall consist of: (i) The President of the Congress; (ii) The delegates elected under article 5.

ARTICLE 11

Special Sessions

The Working Committee may upon its own motion, or shall upon a joint requisition addressed to it, as provided in Article 7 (*a*) convene a meeting of the Lanka Jatika Sabha for considering a resolution for holding a special sessions. Such resolution shall be effective if passed by a two-thirds majority of the members present. Thereupon the Working Committee shall summon a special sessions of the Congress at such time and place as it shall determine and the Articles of the Constitution shall apply with such modification as the Working Committee may consider necessary provided that the delegates of the preceding session shall be the delegates for such special sessions.

ARTICLE 12

President

(1) Any ten delegates may jointly send the name of any primary member duly qualified under Article 3 whom they propose to be elected as President of the next annual sessions of the Congress so as to reach the General Secretaries of the Congress Party on or before a date to be fixed by the Working Committee.

(2) The Secretaries will publish the names of all persons so proposed and it will be open to any person whose name has been so proposed to withdraw his candidature by informing the Secretaries of his intention to do so within 10 days of the publication of the proposed names.

(3) After eliminating the name of any person who has withdrawn the Secretaries shall publish the names of the remaining candidates and circulate them to the Congress Sabhas.

(4) On a date fixed by the Working Committee each delegate in an electoral area shall be entitled to record his vote in favour of one of the candidates for the Presidentship of the Congress at the place to be fixed by the Jatika Asana Sabha.

(5) The Jatika Asana Sabhas shall report to the Lanka Jatika Sabha the number of valid votes of each candidate

(6) As soon as may be after the receipt of the report, the Secretaries shall announce as President-elect the name of the candidate obtaining the largest number of votes provided that such candidate has secured not less than 50 per cent of the votes polled.

(7) In case he does not get the requisite number of votes the delegates in each electoral area shall on a date fixed by the Secretaries elect one out of the two persons getting the highest number of votes at the election and the Secretaries shall on receipt of the report from the Jatika Asana Sabha of the number of votes recorded at the second election declare the person getting the higher number of votes as the duly elected President of the Congress.

(8) In the event of an emergency arising by reason of any cause such as death or resignation of the President elected as above the Secretaries shall forthwith fix a date for a fresh election by the delegates as prescribed above. In case such procedure is found not possible the Lanka Jatika Sabha shall elect the President.

ARTICLE 13

Subjects Committee

The new Lanka Jatika Sabha shall meet as Subjects Committee under the Presidentship of the President-elect at least two days before the annual sessions. The outgoing

Working Committee shall submit to it the draft programme of work for the sessions including resolutions recommended by the different Congress Sabhas.

(2) The Subjects Committee shall proceed to discuss the programme and shall frame resolutions for being [*sic*] moved in the open session. At least one day shall be allotted for the consideration of propositions of which due notice has been given by the Congress Sabhas or members of the Lanka Jatika Sabha other than resolutions recommended by the Working Committee in accordance with the rules prescribed in that behalf.

(3) At each sitting of the Congress sessions the order in which business shall be transacted shall be as follows:—

(*a*) The resolutions recommended for adoption by the Subjects Committee.

(*b*) Any substantive motion not included in (1) and which 25 delegates request the President in writing before the commencement of the Day's sitting to be allowed to place before the Congress.

(4) No amendment shall be permitted to be moved at the annual sessions or any other sessions of the party, unless at least 24 hours notice of it be given to the General Secretaries, and at least one-third of the Subjects Committee vote for the conclusion of the amendment to be moved at any sessions with the leave of a majority of the members of such sessions. This rule does not apply to article 8 (3) *b*.

ARTICLE 14

Funds

The Treasurer shall be in charge of the funds of the Congress and shall keep proper accounts of all investment, income and expenditure.

ARTICLE 15

General Secretaries

(a) The General Secretaries shall be in charge of the office of the Lanka Jatika Sabha and the Working Committee.

(b) The General Secretaries shall be responsible for the publication of the report of the proceedings of the annual or special sessions. Such report shall be published as soon as possible and not later than four months after the sessions.

(c) The General Secretaries shall prepare the report of the work of the Lanka Jatika Sabha and the Working Committee during their period of office and submit it with a full account of the funds which may have come into their hands to the meeting of the Lanka Jatika Sabha immediately before the annual sessions.

ARTICLE 16

Vacancies

The office of a member of the Lanka Jatika Sabha or a Congress Sabha shall be vacated by resignation, death or prolonged absence from Ceylon or by any other method prescribed in the rules, and such vacancy shall be filled in the same manner in which the vacating member was chosen. A vacancy on the Working Committee shall be filled by the President.

ARTICLE 17

Language

(a) The proceedings of the Congress sessions, Lanka Jatika Sabha and the Working Committee shall ordinarily be conducted in Sinhalese and Tamil.

(b) The proceedings of the other Congress Sabhas shall ordinarily be conducted in the language of the areas in which they are established.

51. CONSTITUTION OF THE CEYLON NATIONAL CONGRESS PARTY: 1940[1]

ARTICLE I

Objects

The object of the Ceylon National Congress Party is: (*a*) the attainment by the people of Ceylon of Dominion Status within the meaning of the Statute of Westminster; (*b*) the social and economic development of the country as outlined in the policy and programme of the Congress Party.

ARTICLE II

The Ceylon National Congress Party shall consist of primary members duly elected under Article III.

ARTICLE III

Membership

(1) Any person over the age of 18 years who subscribes to Article I shall on making a written declaration to that effect and presenting an application in Form A annexed hereto, to the General Secretaries of the Congress Party or to any Congress Association mentioned in Article IV shall become a primary member of the Congress Party. The minimum yearly subscription shall be 25 cents.

(2) The applicant on being enrolled shall receive a certificate of membership as per Form B annexed hereto.

(3) Every primary member who has not paid his yearly subscription within three months after he is enrolled as a member, or within six months of the beginning of each year, shall automatically cease to be a member.

(4) No primary member shall be entitled to exercise his rights of voting at any election unless he has been continuously on a Congress register for two months immediately prior to the date of such election.

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1. As derived from a small printed leaflet, publisher unspecified. See C. N. A., 60/4*a*.

(5) The All-Ceylon Congress Committee alone shall have the power to dismiss any member or to adopt any other disciplinary measures against any member after due inquiry.

(6) No person who is a member of the Congress Party shall be a member of an organisation which advocates the representation of communal or special interests in the legislature, or whose objects or programme involve political activities which are in the opinion of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee in conflict with those of the Congress.[1]

(7) No person can be a member of more than one Congress Association at the same time.

ARTICLE IV

The Structure of the Congress

(1) There shall be Congress Associations in: (a) Village Committee areas, (b) Urban Council areas, (c) Municipal Ward areas, composed of the primary members in those areas.

(2) There shall be Congress Committees in State Council Electoral areas elected by the members of the associations mentioned in Article IV (1) within those areas.

(3) There shall be an All-Ceylon Congress Committee elected by the State Council Electoral Committees.[2]

(4) There shall be a Working Committee of the Congress chosen by the President for the year from among the members of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee.

ARTICLE V

Village Committee, Urban Council and Municipal Ward Associations[3]

(1) Each Association shall elect a Chairman, Secretary and a Treasurer.

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1. This subsection was amended at the Convention of 1941.

2. This subsection was amended at the Convention of 1941.

3. This title was not retained in 1941.

29—K 19795 (75/03)

(2) The Secretaries of these associations shall prepare lists in triplicate of primary members within their areas. One copy shall be kept in the local office and two copies sent to the General Secretaries of the Congress Party.

(3) The above mentioned Secretaries shall send quarterly returns of members and payments of subscription to the General Secretaries of the Congress Party. A copy shall be kept at the local office.

(4) One-fourth of the membership fees collected from primary members shall be sent by the respective associations to the Treasurer of the Congress Party. Alterations to this rule can be made by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee after consultation with the associations concerned.

(5) These associations shall have the power to frame rules for the conduct of meetings.

(6) These associations shall have the power to give effect within their areas to the Congress Policy and decisions of the Congress Party.

(7) No association can be constituted without a membership of at least 10.

ARTICLE VI [1]

Congress Electoral Committees

(1) Village Committee Associations, Urban Council Associations and Municipal Ward Associations shall be entitled to send in annually one delegate for the first 100 members and one for each additional 25 to the Congress Electoral Committee.

(2) Such Congress Electoral Committee shall elect a Chairman and a Secretary.

(3) These Committees shall co-ordinate the work of the Village Committee, Urban District Council and Municipal Ward Associations within their respective electoral areas.

1. Article VI was entirely omitted in the Constitution adopted in 1941.

ARTICLE VII

All-Ceylon Congress Committee

(1) Each Congress Electoral Committee shall send in not more than 5 delegates annually to the All-Ceylon Congress Committee.

(2) The President of the Ceylon National Congress Party shall on election become a member of this Committee and its Chairman.

(3) In addition to the members elected to this Committee under Article VII, a sessions of the Congress Party is entitled to elect thereto not more than 25 primary members.

(4) This Committee shall carry out the programme of work laid down by the Congress from sessions to sessions and deal with all new matters that may arise during its term of office.

(5) This Committee shall have the power to frame rules, not inconsistent with this constitution, and of regulating all matters connected with the Congress.

(6) This Committee shall meet at least once in 3 months or as often as required by the Working Committee, or on a joint requisition addressed to the Secretary by not less than 10 members. Such requisition shall specify the purpose for which the meeting is being called. At least 2 weeks' notice with a copy of the agenda shall be given to the members before a meeting of this Committee is called. Notices of motions to be discussed at this Committee shall be given either at the previous meeting of the Committee or at least two weeks prior to the usual monthly meeting.

(7) The quorum shall be 15.

(8) This Committee shall hold office till a new Committee is elected.

(9) Every delegate to the All-Ceylon Congress Committee ex-officio or elected shall pay a monthly subscription of Rs. 1 payable on or before the 10th of each month.

Delegates in default for over three months shall not be permitted to take part in any meeting of this Committee, the Subjects Committee or in any sessions.

(10) The office-bearers of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall consist of a President, two Secretaries and a Treasurer.

(11) An office-bearer shall be eligible for re-election.

(12) The agenda for each monthly meeting shall include the following :—

(i) Minutes.
(ii) Letters.
(iii) Notice of Motions.
(iv) Questions.
(v) Reports of Committees.
(vi) Motions of which due notice has been given.

ARTICLE VIII

Working Committee

(1) The Working Committee shall consist of the President, the Secretaries, the Treasurer and 12 members appointed by the President from amongst the members of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee. The Working Committee shall ordinarily hold office from one annual session to the close of the next one.[1]

(2) The Working Committee shall be the executive authority and as such shall carry out the policy and programme laid down by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee and shall remain responsible thereto.

(3) The Working Committee shall place before every meeting of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee the reports of its proceedings.

1. This subsection was modified in 1941.

ARTICLE IX *Sessions*

(1) The All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall at least three months before the annual sessions of the Congress give public notice of the date and place of such sessions.

(2) The annual sessions shall consist of: (i) The President of the Congress. (ii) The All-Ceylon Congress Committee. (.ii) Electoral Committees. (iv) Delegates sent by the Congress associations mentioned in Article IV. These associations shall not send more than one delegate for every ten members. (v) Each delegate shall pay a fee of Re. 1. No delegate who has not paid his fee shall be entitled to exercise any privileges.[1]

(3) A copy of the agenda for the annual or any other sessions of the Congress shall be sent to every association and to all delegates at least 14 days prior to the sessions. The Working Committee shall always have the right to place on the agenda emergency resolutions.

(4) Each Electoral Committee shall one month before the annual sessions of the Congress send the names and addresses of the members nominated by them as delegates to the annual sessions.

(5) The Working Committee shall take steps to form a Reception Committee for each sessions of the Congress with Chairman.

(6) The quorum for an annual or special sessions shall be 50.

ARTICLE XI[2]

Special Sessions

The All-Ceylon Congress Committee may make arrangements for a special sessions. Thereupon the All-Ceylon

[1] This article was modified in 1941. No. v in this subsection should be treated as a separate subsection. Its inclusion within subsection 2 seems to be an error.

[2] This is an error. It should read as *Article X*. It has not been noticed however and has influenced the *numbering* of subsequent Articles as well.

Congress Committee shall summon a special sessions of the Congress at such time and place as it shall determine and the articles of the constitution shall apply with such modification as the All-Ceylon Congress Committee may consider necessary provided that the delegates of the preceding sessions shall be the delegates for such special sessions.

ARTICLE XII

President

Any Congress Electoral Committee may two months before the date fixed for the annual sessions submit to the All-Ceylon Congress Committee the names of persons who are in its opinion eligible for the Presidentship of the Party for the ensuing year. The All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall then proceed to elect the President for the ensuing year at least a month before the annual sessions. The President shall hold office from one annual sessions to the beginning of the next one.

ARTICLE XIII

Subjects Committee

(1) The new All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall meet as Subjects Committee under the Presidentship of the President-elect at least a day before the annual sessions.

(2) The Subjects Committee shall proceed to discuss the programme and shall frame resolutions for being [*sic.*] moved in the open sessions.

(3) No amendment shall be permitted to be moved at the annual sessions or any other sessions of the Party unless at least 24 hours notice of it be given to the General Secretaries, and at least one-third of the Subjects Committee vote for the inclusion of the amendment to be moved at the sessions.

ARTICLE XIV

Funds

The Treasurer shall be elected annually by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee at least a month before the annual sessions of the Congress and he shall hold office

from one annual session to the close of the next one. He shall be in charge of the funds of the Congress and keep them in a bank approved by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee. He shall keep proper accounts and submit at each annual sessions of the Congress a duly audited balance sheet approved by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee.

ARTICLE XV

General Secretaries

(1) The Secretaries shall be elected annually by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee at least a month before the annual sessions, and shall hold office from one annual sessions to the close of the next one. The Secretaries shall be in charge of the office of the Ceylon National Congress

(2) The Secretary [*sic*] shall be responsible for the publication of the report of the proceedings of the annual or special sessions. Such report shall be published as soon as possible and not later than four months after the sessions.

(3) The Secretary shall prepare the report of the work of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee during the period of their office and submit it to the annual sessions after it has been approved by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee.

ARTICLE XVI

Vacancies

The office of a member of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee or a Congress Association shall be vacated by resignation, death or prolonged absence from Ceylon, or by any other method prescribed in the rules, and such vacancy shall be filled in the same manner in which the vacating member was chosen. A vacancy on the Working Committee shall be filled by the President.[1]

ARTICLE XVII

Language

(a) The proceedengs of the Congress sessions, All-Ceylon Congress Committee and the Working Committee shall ordinarily be conducted in English, Sinhalese and Tamil.

1. This article was modified in 1941.

(b) The proceedings of the other Congress Associations shall ordinarily be conducted in the language of the areas in which they are established.

ARTICLE XVIII

Nominations Board

(1) The All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall appoint a Nominations Board of not more than ten persons with the President as chairman from amongst its members who shall nominate Congress candidates for any general election or by-election of the State Council.

(2) Before making such nominations the Nominations Board through the Secretaries of the Congress may consult the electoral associations in the various electorates. The decision of the Nominations Board shall be final, and such decision shall be conveyed to the electoral associations and the Nominees of the Board through the Secretaries of the Congress as soon as such decision is taken.

(3) Any member of the Congress Party standing for election against the decision of the Nominations Board or who supports an opposing candidate or actively works against the Party candidate shall on a complaint being made to the All-Ceylon Congress Committee by a member or electoral association or on its own initiative disenrol or take any other suitable disciplinary measures against such member after due inquiry. The same procedure shall be adopted in the case of a constituent association which acts against the decision of the Nominations Board.

(4) It shall be the duty of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee to render every assistance to the nominee of the Party in organising his election campaign and whenever necessary the All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall have the power to make grants from the Party Fund to meet the election expenses of such candidate.

ARTICLE XIX

Congress Party in the State Council.

(1) As soon as may be after a general election and before the first meeting of the new State Council, the candidates of the Congress Party who have been elected shall elect a Party Leader and a Party Whip.

(2) The Party Leader may call a meeting of the Congress Party in the State Council, when he so desires, and it shall be the duty of the Party members to abide by the decision of such meetings of the Party, and vote accordingly in the State Council.

(3) Any Congress member who votes against the decision of the Party on any matter before the State Council, shall be reported by the Party Leader, to the All-Ceylon Congress Committee for suitable disciplinary action to be taken against him. The decision of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall be final on any such matter.

(4) The Party Whip shall act as Secretary to the Congress Party in the State Council, and shall keep written record of the meetings of the Party.

ARTICLE XX

Party Fund

(1) There shall be a Party Fund of the Congress Party to be controlled by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee.

(2) Funds of the Party shall be raised by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee by seeking donations from members, and by any other method considered suitable by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee.

(3) The Treasurer shall submit a statement of accounts duly audited to each annual sessions of the Party.

FORM A

APPLICATION FORM

I hereby declare that I accept the policy and programme of the Ceylon National Congress as adopted at the sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held on the 27th December, 1939.

I further declare that I am over 18 years of age and that I desire to become a member of the Congress.

Name and Address } ....
....

Age .... Male/Female .... Occupation ....
State Council Electorate

Name of Village Committee U.D.C. or Municipal Ward } ....

Dated ....

Signature of Applicant.

FORM B

Certified that .... is duly enrolled a member of the Ceylon National Congress and bears Register No. .... in the .... Congress Register of primary members.

Dated ....

Secretaries,
............Congress Association.

52. CONSTITUTION OF THE CEYLON NATIONAL CONGRESS PARTY: 1941

The Amendments in 1941

The constitution of 1941 as circulated in leaflets printed in both Sinhalese and English[1] did not differ a great deal from that circulated in 1940. We print only the amendments.

ARTICLE III

Membership

(6) No person who is a member of an organisation which in the opinion of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee is a political organisation, shall be eligible for election to any office or Committee in the Congress Party.[2]

ARTICLE IV

The Structure of the Congress

(2) Direct membership of the Congress is permitted in areas where there are no associations.

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1. C. N. A. 60/45, a pamphlet printed at the Lankabhinava Visruta Press in Borella, Colombo.

2. This subsection proved highly controversial and significant. Cf. the version presented in 1940 (items 50 & 51) and the discussion of this sub-section in 1943 (items 53-55 below and item 38 above.)

N.B.—In 1940 there was an additional section, Article VI, on "Congress Electoral Commi'tees." Article VI in 1941 is, therefore, based on Article VII of 1940, Article VII on Article VIII of 1940, et cetera.

ARTICLE VI

All-Ceylon Congress Committee

(13) The agenda for meetings shall be prepared by the Working Committee which shall have the power to omit motions which deal with matters not arising out of the policy and programme laid down by the last or any previous sessions.

ARTICLE VII

Working Committee

(1) The Working Committee shall consist of the President, the Secretaries, the Treasurer and not more than 20 members appointed by the President from amongst the members of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee. The Working Committee shall ordinarily hold office until a new one is appointed.

(4) The Working Committee has the power to engage paid officers. Such appointments must be placed before the All-Ceylon Congress Committee for its sanction.

ARTICLE VIII

Sessions

(2) The annual sessions shall consist of:

(1) The President of the Congress,

(2) The All-Ceylon Congress Committee,

(3) Delegates sent by the Congress associations named in Article IV.

(4) Primary members named in Article IV (2) who wish to come as delegates.

(7) The Working Committee shall prepare and circulate the agenda for the sessions.[1]

ARTICLE IX

Subjects Committee

(1) The All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall meet as Subjects Committee before the annual sessions.

ARTICLE XIV

Vacancies

The office of a member of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee rendered vacant shall be filled by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee or by the Congress Association as the case may be. A vacancy on the Working Committee shall be filled by the President.

ARTICLE XVI

Nominations Board

(1) The All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall appoint a Parliamentary Board of not more than five persons with the President as chairman from amongst its members who shall nominate Congress candidates for any general election or by-election of the State Council and also to election's [*sic*] of any municipal or local body.

53. REPORT OF SPECIAL COMMITTEE OF THE WORKING COMMITTEE ON ARTICLE III (6) OF THE CONSTITUTION, Undated[2]

To the Members of the Working Committee of the Ceylon National Congress

We are appointed by you as a Special Committee to consider and report on the following resolution which was to have been moved at the 23rd sessions of the Ceylon

1. This subsection was a new addition. Subsection 6 of the Constitution of 1940 therefore reappeared in 1941 as subsection 8.

2 This is derived from a typescript found in the same file as the circular letter of 8th June, 1943 (item 54 below). See C. N. A., 60/5.

National Congress held at Kelaniya, but which was eventually put off for consideration at a special sessions of the Congress to be held at a later date, namely:

> This Sessions is of opinion that Article 3 (6) of the Constitution should read as follows: 'No person who is a member of an organisation which in the opinion of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee is a political party shall be eligible for membership of the Congress.'

We think that for a proper understanding of the implication of this resolution it is necessary in the first place to be quite clear in our own minds what the exact and accepted meaning of a political party is in modern politics. Political parties have been well defined as groups or bodies of people who, holding the same general view on some, if not all, public questions, seek by concerted action to gain control of the Government as a means of ensuring that the policies in which they are interested will be carried into effect.

It has also been said that a party is a body of men united for promoting the national interest on some particular principle on which they are all agreed, and moreover that organized, drilled and disciplined parties are the only means we have yet discovered by which to secure responsible government, and thus to execute the will of the people. Congress is now quite clear as to the particular principle which in this case overrides all others and for which Congressmen stand. This principle is now enshrined in Article 1 of the Congress constitution and it reads as follows: "The object of the Ceylon National Congress is the attainment of freedom for Ceylon"

Since therefore Congress has this object in view which in fact is the reason for its existence, we are inclined to think that Congress should have a party organisation in order to unite all those who subscribe to this principle, whatever their views are with regard to the social order or

political representation in a free Lanka. Without such an organisation, we think that there would be no allegiance to Congress on the part of those who form the legislature and the Ministry with regard to the policy to be pursued by them in order to attain the end that Congress has in view. We are firmly of the opinion that the legislature as representing the people of Lanka has a great part to play in the achievement of this object and hence the need for a Congress Party organisation. The Congress Party must and will support the candidature of only Congress members and no others, and this is of course on the explicit understanding that they agree to carry out Congress policy with regard to Article 1. If this is not done, we think that Congress will find itself in the unenviable position of having to pass at its meetings rather pious resolutions with regard to its object—resolutions which the people's representatives in Council will be under no obligation to pay any heed to, let alone to carry out. With all its alleged disadvantages and drawbacks, we think that under the present circumstances we have no alternative to the system of party nomination and moreover that modern government and especially the modern cabinet system cannot properly function otherwise—the essence of the cabinet system being the control of the government by a group of persons who have an agreed political policy, which in this case is the attainment of freedom by the people of Lanka.[1] It may also be said, and indeed we know that it has been said, that besides this question of freedom for Lanka, a political organisation may be wedded to a certain economic policy or programme not shared by Congress but which it desired to put into effect by gaining control of the legislature. To this we would reply that such a division of the country, and a seizure of political power, on economic issues, at this stage of her political development is premature and would only result in the delay of the attainment of the object that

1. See extract printed below (p. 1738) which appeared at this stage in an initial draft.

Congress has in view, namely *freedom for Lanka.* We would at the very same time most emphatically assert that the refusal of Congress as such to subscribe to any cut and dried economic theory does not mean that Congress will be unconcerned with the social and economic development of the country. On the contrary, Congressmen, preferably through the Congress Associations, will be encouraged to raise the standard of living of our people by such means as the fostering of local enterprises, cottage industries and especially co-operative societies. Indeed we think that such a course of action in the social and economic field, which all people of goodwill in this island, whatever their privatt economic creeds, could join in and pursue wholeheartedly would undoubtedly be one of the most effective ways of attaining the end we have in view. Once freedom has been attained by the people of Lanka, this party alignment *on the political basis that we have outlined above* will naturally disappear or "wither away" and parties attached to various social and economic policies and programmes will emerge, as in the case of other free and democratic countries.

To sum up our conclusions, we think that:

(1) Membership in Congress should be open to all Ceylonese who subscribe to Article 1.

(2) The Congress Party Organisation should be maintained and strengthened with a view to achieving the end or object Congress has in view.

(3) *Article 3 (6)* of the Constitution which penalises members who belong to other political organisations should be omitted.

(4) The proposed new Article 3 (6) is unnecessary because Article 16 (3) deals sufficiently with members who stand against or oppose Congress Party nominees to the legislatures.

(5) To make the position clearer still, the last sentence of Article XVI (3) [1] should be amended to read as follows: "The same procedure shall be adopted in the case of a constituent association or a member who belongs to a political party which acts against the decision of the Board."

Joseph A. L. Cooray,
Dudley Senanayake.

Extract from Previous Draft of Report prepared by the Special Committee [2]

Should Congress exclude from its membership those persons who belong at the same time to other political organisations? In this connection we must once again emphasize that the sole object for which Congress stands is the attainment of freedom by the people of Lanka. Therefore it seems to us that there is no reason whatever why persons who subscribe to Article 1 should be excluded solely because they belong to ano her political organisat'on at the same time. This would be an unwarrantable splitting up of our strength at this stage of our political development. This policy of exclusion would only result in bitterness on the part of those excluded from the Congress ranks. Their admission to Congress membership does not however mean that they are exempt from loyalty to Congress. As in the case of other members, discipline will be maintained and if for example they were against a Congress nominee at an election, disciplinary action will be taken against him [*sic*] even though by so acting he was doing no more than carrying out the decision of the other political organisation to which he belongs.

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1. This refers to what was identified as Article XVIII in the Constitution of 1940. Subsequently, in 1941, this section became Article XVI.

2 Obtained from an unsigned, undated typescript in the possession of J.A.L. Cooray. This draft is similar, word for word. to most parts of the report which was presented to the Working Committee. However, two paragraphs in the draft were omitted in the report. These are reproduced here.

This may appear at first sight to be a hard rule. But Congress can adopt no other course if it is to retain its individuality and indeed its existence as a potent political organisation in the country. Although a member may go to the legislature on the Congress ticket, Congress will not demand of him adherence to any economic or social policy or programme because Congress itself is not wedded to any one such policy or programme. A member cannot therefore seriously argue that he must seek nomination from some other political body on the ground that he believes in a particular ideology in addition to his views on political freedom. Congress will not interfere with a member's views or voting powers in this connection.

54. CIRCULAR LETTER ON ARTICLE III (6) OF THE CONSTITUTION, 8 June 1943[1]

Congress Office,
Borella Flats,
Colombo, 8 6.43

Article 3 (6) of the Constitution

Dear Sir,

You will remember that at the annual sessions held at Kelaniya the following resolution was put off for consideration at a special sessions of the Congress to be held within this year:—

"This Sessions is of opinion that Article 3 (6) of the constitution should read as follows:—

'No person who is a member of an organisation which in the opinion of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee is a political party, shall be eligible for membership of the Congress'." ...

1. This letter is printed in a single-page leaflet which had a Sinhalese version on the other side. See C. N. A., 60/5.

The reason for the postponement of the consideration of this resolution was that there was a difference of opinion on the subject of the resolution and it was felt that the matter should be further considered by the members of Congress and by the Congress Associations before a definite decision was made. The Working Committee has since considered this question at several meetings and it has been found that there are two different points of views on this matter.

1—There are those who agree with the proposed resolution, and feel that this resolution will clarify the position and prevent later misunderstandings between members and Congress organisations. The simple reason is that when a man belongs to two political parties he may have occasion to be disloyal to one of them.

2—There are others however who feel that membership should be open to all Ceylonese who subscribe to the object of the Congress, namely the attainment of freedom by the people of Ceylon. The Congress party organisation should at the same time be maintained and strengthened with a view to achieving this object. Article 16 (3) of the Congress constitution gives sufficient power to the Congress Committee to deal with members who stand against the Congress party at elections. They feel that when a member joins the Congress he accepts the Congress constitution and therefore accepts the position that they must support the Congress candidate even if they belong to another political organisation.

The majority of the Congress Working Committee support the first view, namely, that it would be better for us to prevent those who belong to other political parties from joining the Congress and that the members of the Congress should not therefore belong to other political parties.

We shall be glad if you will consider these questions, discuss them with your association, so that when you

come to the All-Ceylon Congress Committee on the 19th instant we may arrive at a definite conclusion on this matter.

Yours truly,
J. R. Jayewardene,
J. A. L. Cooray,
Jt. Hony. Secretaries, C. N. C.

55. CONSTITUTION OF THE CEYLON NATIONAL CONGRESS PARTY: 1943[1]

ARTICLE I

Objects

The objects of the Ceylon National Congress are:

(a) The attainment of freedom for Lanka;

(b) The economic and social development of Lanka

ARTICLE II

Membership

(1) All persons who have the right to be registered as a voter at an election of a member to the State Council shall be entitled to become a member of Congress, provided he or she: (a) makes an application to join the Local Congress Association in the Form A. (b) pays the minimum annual subscription of 25 cents.

(2) The applicant on being enrolled shall receive a certificate of membership in Form B from the Ceylon National Congress.

(3) The annual subscription of a member shall be at least 25 cents, which shall be payable before the 30th June each year. Any member in arrears forfeits his right to take part in the deliberations or to vote at any meeting of his local

1 C. N. A. 60*id* and 6*i*. A printed leaflet. A Sinhalese version is also available in leaflet form.

association or in any committee of which he is a member by virtue of his being a member of a local association or at any Congress session.

(4) A member of another political party which subscribes to the Congress creed of freedom shall be entitled to join a Congress organisation provided such party by special resolution decides :

(a) that its members may join a Congress Association ;

(b) that with regard to State Council or local Government elections such party accepts Congress decisions and supports Congress nominees.[1]

ARTICLE III

Organisation

The Ceylon National Congress shall consist of :

(a) Local Congress Associations,

(b) An All-Ceylon Congress Committee,

(c) The Working Committee,

(d) A President, Two Secretaries, A Treasurer.

ARTICLE IV[2]

Local Congress Associations

(1) Local Congress Associations shall be formed for :

(a) One or more village areas ;

(b) Municipal, Urban and Sanitary Board areas or parts thereof.

(2) Every association shall elect a chairman, vice-chairman, secretary or secretaries, treasurer and Committee.

(3) Every Association shall have the right to frame its own rules for the conduct of its meetings.

1. Subsection (4) b was modified slightly in the Constitution of 1944.

2. Another subsection, (7), was added to Article IV in 1944.

(4) Every Association shall on formation send to the Secretaries of Congress the minutes of the inaugural meeting giving full particulars as regards the office-bearers and the number of members. The Secretaries shall place such report before the Working Committee, which shall at its discretion approve it as a Congress organisation. The Working Committee shall have the power to prescribe the area of any Congress Association or amalgamate or sub-divide the area covered by any Congress Association

(5) Every Association shall :

(a) Send a return of its members to reach the Secretaries of Congress before the 30th September of each year

(b) Send along with the return a sum not less than 25 per cent of its annual income derived from subscriptions from members.

(c) Nominate representatives to the All-Ceylon Congress Committee.

(d) Send delegates to the annual or special sessions.

(6) Every association shall carry out faithfully any resolution passed at the Congress sessions or by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee. On failure of any association to carry out any such resolutions the All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall have the power to refuse further recognition of such a Local Association.

ARTICLE V

All-Ceylon Congress Committee

(1) The All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall consist of :

(a) The President ;

(b) Two Secretaries ;

(c) The Treasurer ;

(d) Representatives of Local Associations ;

(*e*) 25 Members elected at the annual sessions who shall hold office until the appointment of a new committee.

(2) Each Congress Association is entitled to send to the All-Ceylon Congress Committee such number of representatives as shall be decided in the following manner by the Working Committee. The total number of members in Congress as ascertained from the returns made to the Congress (Secretaries) on or before the 30th September shall be divided by 100, and an association is entitled to one member for the quote [*sic* ?] arrived thereby provided that every association shall have at least one representative. The Secretaries shall forthwith inform Local Associations of the number of members the association is entitled to send.

(3) Every Congress Association shall one month before the annual sessions send to the Joint Secretaries of Congress the names and addresses of its representatives elected to serve in the All-Ceylon Congress Committee for the ensuing year.

(4) This Committee shall carry out the decisions of and the work laid down by the Congress from session to session.

(5) This Committee shall meet as frequently as the Working Committee shall think fit to convene meetings, or on a requisition signed by at least 25 members. Such requisition shall state the business for which the Committee is sought to be convened.[1]

(6) The Secretaries shall give at least two weeks notice of a meeting unless otherwise decided by the Working Committee.

(7) Notice of motions to be discussed at meetings of this Committee shall be given either at a previous meeting of the Committee or at least 10 days before a Committee meeting.

1. This subsection was amended slightly in 1944.

(8) The Secretaries shall send a week before the date of meeting an agenda of such meeting to all members.

(9) Every member of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall pay to the Treasurer a sum of Rs. 4 per year. Members in default shall not be entitled to participate in the proceedings of the Committee.

(10) The quorum for a meeting shall be [15] fifteen.

(11) The agenda shall be prepared by the Working Committee, which shall have the power to omit motions which deal with matters not arriving out of the policy and programme laid down by the last or any previous sessions.

ARTICLE VI

The Congress Working Committee

(1) The Congress Working Committee shall consist of:

(a) the President;

(b) Secretaries;

(c) the Treasurer; and

(d) not more than 15 members appointed by the President from among the members of Congress.

(2) The Congress Working Committee shall be the Executive authority and shall carry out the policy and programme laid down by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee, take all necessary steps to hold the annual sessions and for these purposes may collect funds and take all such necessary steps.

(3) The Working Committee shall place before the All-Ceylon Congress Committee a report of its proceedings.

ARTICLE VII

President

(1) Local Associations shall at least 6 weeks before the date fixed for the annual sessions submit to the All-Ceylon Congress Committee the name of a person for the office of President of the Congress for the ensuing year.

(*e*) 25 Members elected at the annual sessions who shall hold office until the appointment of a new committee.

(2) Each Congress Association is entitled to send to the All-Ceylon Congress Committee such number of representatives as shall be decided in the following manner by the Working Committee. The total number of members in Congress as ascertained from the returns made to the Congress (Secretaries) on or before the 30th September shall be divided by 100, and an association is entitled to one member for the quote [*sic* ?] arrived thereby provided that every association shall have at least one representative. The Secretaries shall forthwith inform Local Associations of the number of members the association is entitled to send.

(3) Every Congress Association shall one month before the annual sessions send to the Joint Secretaries of Congress the names and addresses of its representatives elected to serve in the All-Ceylon Congress Committee for the ensuing year.

(4) This Committee shall carry out the decisions of and the work laid down by the Congress from session to session.

(5) This Committee shall meet as frequently as the Working Committee shall think fit to convene meetings, or on a requisition signed by at least 25 members. Such requisition shall state the business for which the Committee is sought to be convened.[1]

(6) The Secretaries shall give at least two weeks notice of a meeting unless otherwise decided by the Working Committee.

(7) Notice of motions to be discussed at meetings of this Committee shall be given either at a previous meeting of the Committee or at least 10 days before a Committee meeting.

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1. This subsection was amended slightly in 1944.

(8) The Secretaries shall send a week before the date of meeting an agenda of such meeting to all members.

(9) Every member of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall pay to the Treasurer a sum of Rs. 4 per year. Members in default shall not be entitled to participate in the proceedings of the Committee.

(10) The quorum for a meeting shall be [15] fifteen.

(11) The agenda shall be prepared by the Working Committee, which shall have the power to omit motions which deal with matters not arriving out of the policy and programme laid down by the last or any previous sessions.

ARTICLE VI

The Congress Working Committee

(1) The Congress Working Committee shall consist of:

(*a*) the President;

(*b*) Secretaries;

(*c*) the Treasurer; and

(*d*) not more than 15 members appointed by the President from among the members of Congress.

(2) The Congress Working Committee shall be the Executive authority and shall carry out the policy and programme laid down by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee, take all necessary steps to hold the annual sessions and for these purposes may collect funds and take all such necessary steps.

(3) The Working Committee shall place before the All-Ceylon Congress Committee a report of its proceedings.

ARTICLE VII

President

(1) Local Associations shall at least 6 weeks before the date fixed for the annual sessions submit to the All-Ceylon Congress Committee the name of a person for the office of President of the Congress for the ensuing year.

(8) The Working Committee shall always have the right to place any emergency resolutions for the consideration of the sessions or any amendments notice of which has been given under rule 9.

(9) Any amendment to resolutions on the agenda should be sent to the Secretaries at least 24 hours before the sessions.

(10) Special sessions of Congress may be summoned by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee whenever expedient and the rules applicable to the sessions will generally apply with modifications as desired by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee.

(11) The quorum for an annual or special sessions shall be fifty [50].

ARTICLE XI

Vacancies

1. Any vacancy created during the year in the office of President, Joint Secretaries and Treasurer shall be filled by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee.

(2) Vacancies in the Working Committee shall be filled by the President, and any vacancy in the All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall be filled by the Congress Association of which he was a representative or by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee.

ARTICLE XII

Nomination Board

(1) The All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall soon after the annual sessions appoint from among its members a Nomination Board of not less than 3 and not more than 5 persons with the President as Chairman.

(2) Such Board may nominate candidates for any general election or by-election of the State Council.[1]

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1. This subsection was amended in 1944.

[illegible] Nomination Board.

4. The Nomination Board shall [illegible] Congress candidate. [illegible] should be [illegible]

ARTICLE XIII

1. [illegible] a member of the [illegible] support [illegible] candidate [illegible] a complaint made to [illegible] Committee by a member or [illegible] shall be liable to [illegible] disciplinary measures [illegible] Congress Committee.

(2) Where there is no [illegible] is seeking election [illegible] members of Congress shall not [illegible]

(3) The above rules shall [illegible] Associations acting in similar [illegible]

(4) The All-Ceylon Congress [illegible] ciplinary action against any [illegible]

(5) The All-Ceylon Congress [illegible] from membership, or expel, [illegible] parties which in its opinion [illegible] the Congress.

ARTICLE XIV

It shall be the duty of the All-Ceylon [illegible] and all Congress members to [illegible] tance to the [illegible] of Congress in [illegible]

campaign, and whenever necessary the All-Ceylon Congress Committee shall have the power to make grants from the Party Fund to meet the election expenses of such candidate.

ARTICLE XV

Congress Party in the Legislature

(1) Such nominees of Congress who are elected shall form themselves into a Congress Party in the legislature.

(2) Such party shall elect a Party Leader and a Party Whip.

(3) The party shall frame its own rules as to the conduct of the business of the party.

(4) Any Congress member who votes against the decision of the party shall be liable the penalties of Article XIII.

ARTICLE XVI

Party Fund

(1) There shall be a Party Fund of the Congress Party to be controlled by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee.

(2) All funds of the Party shall be raised by the All-Ceylon Congress Committee by seeking donations from members, and by any other methods considered suitable.

(3) The Treasurer shall submit a statement of accounts of such funds duly audited to the annual sessions of the Congress.

ARTICLE XVII

Amendments

The rules of Congress shall only be amended at the annual or special sessions of Congress and in all matters not provided for in the above rules the decision of the All-Ceylon Congress Committee is final.

56. CONSTITUTION OF THE CEYLON NATIONAL CONGRESS PARTY: 1944[1]

The Constitution of 1944 was substantially the same as that of 1943. Only a few minor alterations were effected. We print the amended sub-sections in full.

ARTICLE II

Membership

(4) *b*. That with regard to State Council or local Government elections and with regard to any other activity in furtherance of the Congress object of freedom, such party accepts Congress decisions.

ARTICLE IV

Local Congress Association

(7) No Association can be constituted without a membership of at least 25.[2]

ARTICLE V

All-Ceylon Congress Committee

(5) This Committee shall meet at least once in 4 months and as frequently as the Working Committee shall think fit to convene meetings, or on a requisition signed by at least 25 members. Such requisition shall state the business for which the Committee is sought to be convened.

ARTICLE XII

Nomination Board

(2) Such Board may nominate candidates for any general election or by-election of the State Council or local bodies.

57. APPENDIX: CONSTITUTION OF THE COLOMBO SOUTH NATIONAL CONGRESS ASSOCIATION, n.d.[3]

1. *Name*.—The name of the Association shall be "The Colombo South National Congress Association."

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1 C. N. A. 60/7; a leaflet (printed at the L. V. Press) in both *English* and Sinhalese.

2 This entire subsection was a new addition.

3. Based on a typescript located in the *J. R. Jayewardene MSS* (see C.N.A., 60/348).

2. *Object.*—The object of the Association shall be: (*a*) The attainment of Freedom for Lanka. (*b*) The economic and social development of Lanka.

3. *Membership.*—(1) Membership shall be open to all Ceylonese of either sex over the age of eighteen (18) and resident in Colombo South, who would subscribe to the Congress Creed. (Cinnamon Gardens, Colpetty, Bambalapitiya, Wellawatte N. & S., Havelock Town, Thimbirigasyaya).

(2) Each application for membership shall be proposed by one member and seconded by another and shall be placed before the Managing Committee for acceptance. The decision of the Managing Committee shall be final.

(3) The membership subscription shall be at least 25 cents per annum, which shall be payable before the 30th June of each year.

(4) Any member whose subscription is in arrears will not be permitted to vote at any general or committee meetings and is liable to be struck off the roll of members by the Managing Committee.

4. *Office-bearers.*—The office-bearers of the Association shall consist of a President, two Vice-Presidents, two Joint Secretaries, and a Treasurer who shall be elected at the annual general meeting of the Association and shall hold office till the next annual general meeting.

5. *Management.*—(*a*) The management of the affairs of the Association and the custody of its property shall be vested in a Managing Committee composed of the office-bearers of this Association mentioned in Clause 4 and 30 other members who shall be elected at the annual general meeting and shall hold office till the next annual general meeting.

(*b*) The decision of the Managing Committee on any question placed before it shall be final and binding on all members unless and until it is rescinded by a resolution at a general meeting.

(*c*) The quorum for a Managing Committee hall be 7.

(*d*) Any vacancies occuring among the office-bearers or Managing Committee between two annual general meetings shall be filled by the majority vote of the Managing Committee. The Committee shall meet at least once in two months.

(*e*) A special meeting of the Managing Committee may be called at the request of 7 members of the Committee, who shall specify in writing to the Secretary, the purpose for which the meeting is summoned. The Secretary shall call such a meeting within 10 days of the request for same, giving at least 3 days' notice of the meeting, stating the object for which it is convened, to every member of the Committee.

(*f*) Working Committee : The Managing Committee shall have power to appoint a Working Committee consisting of the President, Vice Presidents, Secretary or Secretaries, Treasurer and four others among its members, to carry out the policy and programme laid down by it.

(*g*) The Working Committee shall place before the Managing Committee from time to time a report of its proceedings.

(*h*) The Quorum for a Working Committee shall be three.

6. *General Meeting.*—(1) There shall be an annual general meeting held in November each year.

(2) Seven clear days notice in writing shall be given by the Secretary to each member of the Association.

(3) *At the annual general meeting the Secretary shall* submit the report of the activities and progress of the Association during the concluding year, and the Treasurer an audited statement of the proceeds and disbursements for the period and the assets and liabilities, followed by the election of office-bearers.

(4) A special general meeting shall be convened by the Secretary at the request of the Managing Committee or of

15 members who shall specify in writing to the Secretary the purpose for which the meeting is requisitioned. The Secretary shall convene such a meeting within three weeks of the receipt of the request for same. The meeting shall deal only with the question for which it was convened. The Secretary shall give seven days notice of the meeting, stating the object for which it is convened to every member of the Association.

(5) Notices of motions and questions for the general meeting from members will not be placed on the agenda, unless these are received by the Secretary 7 clear days before the date of the meeting.

(6) The Rules of the Association shall not in any way be altered, added to, or amended except at a meeting where due notice has been given (Clause 6 Section (4)) provided that such notice shall be given not less than seven (7) days before such meeting to every member by letter delivered at or posted to his address, which shall contain full particulars of all alterations and additions proposed. Provided that no alterations and additions or amendment shall be carried except by a majority of at least two-thirds of the members present at the meeting.

(7) The quorum for a general meeting shall be fifteen (15).

7. *Auditor.*—The annual general meeting shall appoint an Auditor for the year.

8. *Disciplinary Action.*—The Managing Committee shall have power to take disciplinary action on members and their decision is subject to appeal to the A. C. C. C.

9. *Contingencies.*—In the event of any question or matter arising not provided for in these Rules, the decision of the Managing Committee shall be final.